

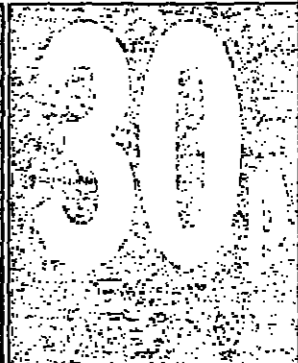
Times readers bring hope to tragic Dorah

page 14

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plus Fantasy League

Hopkins and the futile world of Hollywood



Fears of threat to human health

Europe puts ban on farm antibiotics

By CHARLES BREMNER IN BRUSSELS AND MICHAEL HORNSBY

FARMERS must stop using four common antibiotics in poultry and pig feed because of fears about the effects on people who eat the meat...



Typical! The day I get a sore throat they ban the antibiotics

These antibiotics are not dangerous in themselves - but the scientific evidence gathered by the European Commission...

decide whether to allow imported meat from animals given the antibiotics. Any attempts to ban such imports would prompt charges of protectionism...



Diane Blood cuddles a Christmas toy yesterday as she speaks of her happiness

Diane Blood tells of her joy

By PAUL WILKINSON

DIANE BLOOD had to wait three days before she could cuddle the baby she fought a three-year legal battle to conceive...

Pension opt-out right to be ended

By PHILIP WEBSTER POLITICAL EDITOR

FIRMS are to be given the right to require their workers to join the company pension scheme under government proposals...

Danger of inflation falls

Factory gate inflation in November fell to its lowest level since records began...

Tory 'lunatics'

Tony Blair and William Hague widened the divide over Europe as the Prime Minister used the aftermath of the Vienna summit to accuse Tories of lunacy...

Table with 2 columns: Category and Page Number. Includes TV & Radio, Weather, Crosswords, Letters, etc.

Spencers escape flames at Cape Town family mansion

By MICHAEL HARVEY

EARL SPENCER and his four children escaped unhurt yesterday when lightning sent fire sweeping through the family mansion in South Africa...

The alarm was raised by Warrick Mulder, 14, who saw the flames from his bedroom 500 yards away...



Firefighters tackle the burning thatched roof

Palestine receives Clinton's support

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN GAZA CITY

PRESIDENT Clinton yesterday defied death threats by Islamic militants and made a historic first visit to territory controlled by Yasser Arafat...

Mr Clinton ignored pleas from the Israeli Government to avoid landing at the new Gaza International Airport...

Mighty mouse may give old people muscle

By NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

SCIENTISTS have developed a way of reversing the enfeebling effects of old age...

So far, the only beneficiaries are a race of supermice created by the scientific team at the University of Pennsylvania Medical Centre in Pittsburgh...

Presenting the results of the study at a meeting of the American Society for Cell Biology in San Francisco yesterday, Professor H. Lee Sweeney said...

But before the technique could be applied to humans, ethical considerations would need to be addressed...

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Boat survivor found body of dead friend

THE sole survivor of a boating accident that robbed the tiny island of Iona of a generation of young men saw the body of one of his dead friends as he scrambled ashore after 45 minutes in the sea.

Gordon Grant, 33, made the grim discovery after fighting for his life in stormy waters when a wooden dinghy capsized as he and four friends returned from a dance on neighbouring Mull.

The body of Bob Hay, 23, a tourist boat crewman from Iona, who three weeks earlier had been filmed for *Blind Date*, was lying on the shore a few hundred yards from Fionnphort, Mull, when Mr Grant reached land. Realising that his friend was dead, the exhausted man climbed a 15ft cliff and ran barefoot for 1 1/2 miles to raise the alarm at a guest house. The surgeon who treated Mr Grant said last night that he was lucky to have survived for so long in sea temperatures as low as 8C.

The five men, aged 19 to 33, had made the half-mile crossing between Mull and Iona many times. Their 14ft boat, with a small outboard motor, is thought to have been swamped by two large waves at about 2.30am on Sunday, when it was less than a quarter of a mile from shore.

The friends, all experienced boatmen, were quickly separated by the treacherous rip tides in the Sound of Iona. They were not wearing lifejackets.

Exhausted man raised the alarm after a 1 1/2-mile dash in his bare feet, reports Shirley English

Battling against the currents, Mr Grant kicked off his shoes and swam for 45 minutes in darkness before reaching the shore. He was treated at Lorn and District General Hospital, Oban, for hypothermia, face and hand cuts and severe foot blisters before being allowed home with his sister yesterday afternoon. He works for the boat trips for tourists.

His girlfriend, Catherine Smith, youngest daughter of John Smith, the late Labour leader, is understood to have been at his bedside. Her father was buried on Iona in 1994.

The surgeon, Sham Yadav, said Mr Grant was in a vulnerable mental state and hospital staff had not told him the full extent of the tragedy.

"When he left the hospital he was unaware of what had happened to his friends. I think this has had a numbing effect on him. He has survived and that is all he is thinking about."

As darkness fell last night

police said that there was little hope of finding the three missing men alive. The air, land and sea search around Iona and Mull, which involved more than 100 people including islanders, relatives of the missing men, coastguards, mountain rescue teams and police divers, was temporarily called off. It was expected to resume at first light today.

Those missing, feared dead, are Alisdair Dougal, 19, a fisherman, Logie MacFadyen, 24, a farmworker, and David Kirkpatrick, 23, a fisherman.

Yesterday the close-knit community of 86 people on the island, the historic cradle of Christianity in Scotland, was in mourning. Those who were not searching the rocky coastline lit candles in the church or comforted the bereaved.

Mr Grant's mother, Helen, said the island's heart had been ripped out. "We are a famous island, but not a famous people and we would give anything not to have this attention. I am the lucky one; my son is the one who survived. But I felt like a mother to these other boys as well."

"These boys were the future for this island and we have now lost that. This has ripped the heart out of our already fragile community."

The Rev David Taylor, of Iona parish church, said a "great mourning" had descended on the island. "The whole community has closed down today. Everything is shut. People are keeping indoors or visiting the bereaved. Here the loss to one family is a loss to everyone."

The five men were thrown into the sea as they returned from a dinner dance at the Argyll Arms at Bunnassan, Mull. Hotel staff said that the men had arrived late and were not drunk when they left.

Cilla Black, the presenter of *Blind Date*, has sent condolences to the family of Mr Hay. A spokesman for the BBC said that a decision on whether to go ahead with the broadcast would be taken after consultation with the family.



More than a hundred people were searching the rocky coast of Iona yesterday for signs of the missing men. The island has a population of just 86

Islanders cling on in rocky outposts

Communities have defied drift to mainland, writes Alan Hamilton

THE loss of four young men is a terrible event to befall the close-knit community of Iona, but it is not the body-blow that it would once have been in the days when an insular life was sustainable only as long as there was enough muscle to harvest food and man a boat.

Scotland's last significant surrender of occupied territory occurred in 1930, when the population of the remote archipelago of St Kilda, 110 miles west of the mainland, petitioned the Government to be resettled in metropolitan Scotland when their numbers fell below a viable level.

St Kilda was another world, a self-sufficient time warp that

survived on fishing, a few sheep, and the gathering of fulmars and other seabirds from impossible cliffs by sure-footed youths. The islands once supported a population of 200, but by 1930 numbers had fallen to 35, chiefly through disease and emigration.

Since then St Kilda has had no permanent resident, only transient naturalists, work parties restoring the remains of the deserted village, and an army detachment tracking rockets from the South Uist firing range.

The outlook for islands is better now, although St Kilda is such a far-flung outpost that



even today it would be difficult to sustain a community there.

Scotland's most remote island populations are now generally regarded as Foula and Fair Isle, both outlying the Shetland Islands. Both once relied on enough men to crew a boat across more than 20 miles of wild sea to fetch supplies from the Shetland main-

land, but both now have airstrips. Foula just manages to cling to a population of 42, but with only one child in the island primary school.

Fair Isle does better. A population that had sunk to 45 in the late 1940s has risen to 68, with six children at school, and adults making a living from a mixture of crofting, handicrafts and secretarial work for distant employers over the Internet.

The island is something of a special case, with its bird observatory attracting many visitors, and an ultimate landlord in the National Trust for Scotland, which vets would-be islanders to ensure that those planning to move there have some aptitude for crofting. There are many applicants. Other groups on the fringe

of the British Isles cling on with tenacity and with some hope for the future. Among other Shetland dots, The Skerries have 87 inhabitants and nine children at school, Fetlar also has 87, with 12 school pupils, while Papa Stour has 35 inhabitants and seven schoolchildren.

"It's no longer a question of manning a boat: it's a question of employment openings and social opportunities," Michael Peterson of the Shetland Islands Council said.

"Children from the outer islands have to leave them to attend secondary school: the big test is whether they go back." The tragedy of the lost men of Iona was that they had gone back, and that they were prepared to work in a small community far from bright city lights, and give it a future.

Ex-soldier who shot at police is jailed

BY SIMON DE BRUCELLES

A FORMER Army marksman who hijacked a police Range Rover at gunpoint after being stopped for speeding was jailed for 11 years yesterday.

Exeter Crown Court had been told that PC Keith Evans, 30, and PC Kevin Gulliford, 36, stopped Goody and a friend for speeding on the A38 between Plymouth and Exeter last February in the early hours of the morning. They put him into the back of their Range Rover after he gave them a false name.

Evans, now a detective, said that he was in the driver's seat when he heard the gun being cocked. "It touched my temple. I was petrified," he said. PC Evans let him out of the car and was backing away when PC Gulliford tackled Goody and the pistol was fired.

Goody, a former Royal Green Jacket, claimed that he had fired in the air in confusion after being hit by CS spray. The former Royal Green Jacket, from South Oxendon, Essex, was cleared of attempting to murder the officers, but found guilty of possessing the pistol with intent to endanger life. He had earlier admitted several other charges.

Judge William Taylor told him: "It was a matter of complete indifference to you whether you missed them, wounded them or even killed them."

Tycoon wins case over fake car mascots

BY A CORRESPONDENT

A FORMULA ONE racing tycoon who spent £500,000 on what turned out to be a doctored collection of Lalique car mascots won £945,000 damages at the High Court in London yesterday.

Mansour Ojeh, co-owner of the McLaren racing team, also parted with his own 12 car mascots to complete the deal for 17 deep purple glass sculptures made by Rene Lalique in the 1920s.

Mr Justice Buckley ruled yesterday that the colour, which he had been told made his pieces more rare and desirable than his clear glass crystal Lalique collection, had been added by a radiation process at a much later date.

Mr Ojeh, who has homes in London, Paris and Saudi Arabia, sued Mark Waller, a Lalique glass expert, and his company Galerie Moderne, of Belgravia, London, for negligence and breach of contract.

The judge said that the case was not about the authenticity of the mascots, but whether Lalique coloured them.

"The issue is whether Lalique himself arranged the irradiation as opposed to some opportunist in the late 1970s," he said.

Mr Justice Buckley said that Mr Waller had offered to appraise Mr Ojeh's collection of

car mascots to help him upgrade it to contain the "finest and rarest examples".

This is when Mr Walker offered for sale the 17 deep purple examples, which Mr Ojeh said were not coloured by Lalique and "in that sense were fakes".

The car mascots were produced at the Lalique factory in Fontainebleu in the 1920s and 1930s and were made of clear glass so that they could be fixed to radiators and lit from below. Art experts had told the judge there were no records of Lalique colouring the mascots.

The judge ordered Mr Waller to pay £360,402 damages and Galerie Moderne £485,347 damages. They were also ordered to pay Mr Ojeh's costs of 150,000.



One of the mascots

Police ask court for curfew on rapist

BY RUSSELL JENKINS

POLICE have begun legal moves to impose a curfew on a rapist in the first action of its kind under the new Crime and Disorder Act.

They have not named the man publicly, but he is known to be Michael Gordon, 35, who was sentenced to 12 years in prison for raping two students at knifepoint in Manchester eight years ago.

Police have warned female students to keep their windows and doors locked. Gordon, who was released from prison earlier this year, has been spotted by officers in Rushmore, a district popular with university students. They allege that Gordon was seen on December 8 "acting in such a way that there is reasonable cause to believe that an order is necessary to protect the public from serious harm by him".

Police will put documents outlining their fears about Gordon before a stipendiary magistrate on December 23 and ask for a curfew to be imposed between 10pm and 7am. They are claiming powers to protect the public from sex offenders contained in the Crime and Disorder Act, which became law two weeks ago.

Gordon's solicitor, Mark Carter, said: "At court Mr Gordon will be resisting this application because he maintains that he has done nothing."

Mild spell saves abandoned baby

BY TIM JONES

A NEWBORN baby boy, wrapped in only a towel, survived for seven hours in the open because of record high temperatures, police said yesterday.

The boy, with his umbilical cord still attached, was found on a lawn by the owner of a house in the remote village of Soarston, Norfolk, in the early hours of yesterday and taken to a special care unit at the Norfolk and Norwich hospital.

Police believe his mother may be in need of urgent medical attention and are urging her to contact them. The baby survived because the average minimum tem-

perature in the area was 7.5C, compared to the seasonal average of 1.5C, police believe. The baby, who has been christened Billy by nurses, was last night moved out of the incubator and placed in an ordinary cot.

Throughout Britain, high temperatures encouraged expectations of a warm Christmas although the Meteorological Office said that cold fronts sweeping in for the weekend could return December to a chilly normality.

In Scotland, Kinloss enjoyed a balmy night when an almost summery 15.6C (60.1F) was recorded, the highest since records began in 1951. At Aviemore, the

prospect of Christmas skiing on the slopes receded when the thermometer climbed to 13.2C (55.7F), while a temperature of 12.6C (54.7F) at Aldergrove, near Belfast, was the highest for December since 1927.

In England, Manchester enjoyed an unseasonal 9.1C (48F) night while London, at 10.4C (50F), and the West Country, at 11.6C (53F), were even warmer.

Bookmaker William Hill is offering 6-1 on a White Christmas for London and 4-1 for the same in Glasgow where one bet of £4,500 has already been laid.

Forecast, page 22

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Tough nut who drove neighbour crackers

By ROBIN YOUNG

PEACE returned to Monahan Avenue in Purley, South London, yesterday. The street's most rumbustious resident, Sir Bernard Ingham, former press secretary to Margaret Thatcher, was away from home.

Sir Bernard was arrested on Sunday evening and interviewed at the local police sta-

tion after an argument with his neighbour, Barry Cripps, a builder who lives at the curiously named Nutcracker Gables, about access to their neighbouring garages.

Before leaving home at the crack of dawn yesterday, Sir Bernard said: "All that happened was that I have an extremely troublesome neighbour. He drove over my land to try to get his car into a rear garage. He knows he should not do so."

"When I remonstrated with him, he blocked my way into my garage and then alleged that I damaged his door, although I could see no damage."

Mr Cripps, though, was sufficiently incensed to call the po-



Sir Bernard, left, has clashed before with Barry Cripps, right, over access to their neighbouring garages. The Ingham's is on the right and Mr Cripps's is at the end of the lane

lice. "I gave them a statement," Sir Bernard said. "It's neither here nor there. Those are the facts."

For his part Mr Cripps issued a response scribbled on a torn sheet of paper. It said: "At 5pm approximately there was an incident involving damage to one of our vehicles. The police were called and the matter has been dealt with."

Mr Cripps has crossed swords with his more-famous neighbour before. In 1992 Sir

Bernard, a man with a reputation as a bare-knuckle political fighter, lost a battle to force Mr Cripps to remove a £70,000 loft conversion he had built without planning permission.

Sir Bernard also objected to the garages Mr Cripps had built, to a sauna hut erected in his garden, and a yellow Wendy house Mr Cripps had put up for his son. Sir Bernard further objected to Mr Cripps raising his lawn by 5ft, erecting a wall enclosing a small

yard at the back of the house, and constructing a new drive.

Two days before a public inquiry was to be held in March last year, Mr Cripps came to an arrangement with the local council to lower his roof line by 8in near Sir Bernard's house in return for retrospective planning permission.

Mr Cripps's rear garage is a particularly ugly structure, made of whitewashed breeze blocks. Yesterday Mr Cripps released a statement claiming

that Sir Bernard had kicked and denied the door of his Mercedes during their confrontation.

Mervyn Toogood, 50, a neighbour who read out a statement on behalf of Mr and Mrs Cripps, said: "They have specifically asked that the media respects their anonymity at this stage as they have already had to endure Sir Bernard's overbearing attitude for several years and do not wish to engage in a public dispute

with him." The car allegedly damaged in the dispute is one of three Mercedes owned by the couple. All three have personalised number plates. Yesterday the newer of Mr Cripps's two Mercedes was parked 30 yards up Hill Road opposite the contentious driveway. The car, a silver A120 equipped with baby chair and storing a Dimplex multi-purpose heater, bore no signs of damage. Mr Cripps's other car was not in sight. Those who claim to have seen it recently said that it, too, did not appear to have been marked.

Purley is a suburb of a suburb. It is to Croydon what Croydon is to London: namely an ugly appendage.

The town centre, a short walk from Sir Bernard's home, is replete with ethnic eateries such as Stars American Restaurant, The Rice Wok and My Old China Chinese restaurants, the "Turkish-style" Barbecue Pit and the Thai Thongma.

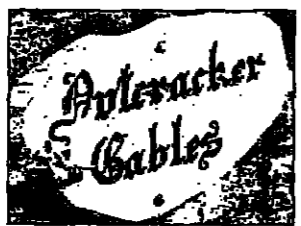
It is difficult to think that Sir Bernard, frequents any of those, but he of the aggressive eyebrows and bull-mastiff

jowls is plainly popular in the neighbourhood. "It is an honour and a privilege to have him living in the street," one resident of Monahan Avenue said. "I often see Sir Bernard walking to the station. He is still a fine figure of a man," said another man in Woodcote Valley Road before returning to the old people's home where he is a resident.

Fewer had kind words to say about Mr Cripps. "He is a law to himself," was all that the denizens of Monahan Avenue would say.

At Purley police station the off-the-record opinion among the local bobbies was that the whole affair would come to nothing. "It sounds like a tiff between hot-tempered neighbours," said one. "We often get such people to come in and give such statements. It gives them time to cool down and see some sense."

Both parties were yesterday said to be consulting solicitors, and Sir Bernard has been put on police bail to return to the local station on February 21 pending a report by the Crown Prosecution Service.



Sign on Cripps home



Princess's butler has talks on job

By MICHAEL HARVEY

PAUL BURRELL, the former butler to Diana, Princess of Wales, yesterday met the chairman of her memorial fund to discuss his future.

Andrew Purkis had talks with Mr Burrell at the charity's offices in London after reports that he is to be ousted from his post as events and fundraising manager. The 40-year-old butler, whom the Princess described as her rock, is said to be angered at his treatment.

He was given the £36,000-a-year post after the Princess's death and has become the public face of the organisation. But since Dr Purkis took over earlier this year it has become clear that, as the fund

concentrates on dispensing some of the £85 million collected, there is no place for fundraising.

One insider said: "Paul has done a great job, but the truth is now that he has very little to do. The fund does not want to compete with other charities by actively fundraising."

Mr Burrell made no comment when he arrived at the fund's offices in County Hall. He is said to face a choice of resignation or redundancy and is likely to be clearing his desk within weeks if not days. Since his appointment in February Mr Burrell has been seen at many showbusiness fundraising events and has been fêted across America.

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BBC man cleared of assaulting girlfriend

Court is told that case was brought out of revenge when reporter ended relationship, reports Susie Steiner

A BBC journalist was cleared of assaulting his girlfriend yesterday after a court heard that she had brought the charges out of revenge when he had ended the relationship.

Philip Mercer, a reporter for Radio 1's *Newsbeat*, punched the air with delight as he left Ealing Magistrates' Court.

Louise Port, 21, a freelance sports journalist for Radio 5 Live, had claimed that he exploded into violence during an argument on July 17. She said that he had dragged her by the hair from the bedroom into the living room of their flat in West London, inflicting blows that left her needing hospital treatment. Medical evidence, however, failed to corroborate her claims.

Outside court, Mr Mercer's lawyer, Julian Knowles, said that the verdict "confirms that he has an absolutely unblemished reputation".

Andrew Dowden, for the prosecution, told the court yesterday: "They had been talking about going away to the country for the weekend and it turned into an argument. Mr Mercer could only express his emotions by trying to smother his girlfriend and beat her

senseless, as he had beaten her on other occasions."

But Mr Knowles, for Mr Mercer, said: "Miss Port alleged this man, who is a fit 30-year-old football player, sat on top of her and repeatedly punched her in the face with clenched fists. What is the result? Only a generalised and slight swelling to the lower lip. Hardly consistent with the account given to police."

Miss Port, a former girlfriend of the television comedian Lee Hurst, was described as "an aggressive and volatile young woman, given to outbursts of temper" and "capable, if not prone, to using violence". She had a history of depression and a tendency, at best, to exaggerate and, at worst, to lie, said the defence.

Mr Mercer, of Okehampton, Devon, claimed that Miss Port had attacked him and that he was forced to restrain her.

"She was angry with Mr Mercer because he had not come home late - the complaint of wives and girlfriends up and down the country," said Mr Knowles.

Her decision to complain to the police came only after Mr Mercer had rejected her pleas



Mercer: he had wanted the relationship to end

to continue the relationship. "She wanted to persuade Mr Mercer to go out with her again. He wouldn't or didn't," said Mr Knowles. "She did it out of revenge - that is what this case is purely about."

Miss Port had previously described other incidents of alleged violence, including one in which she claimed that Mr Mercer had attacked her at Broadcasting House during a nightshift after telling her that she was nicknamed "the Scottish Open". None of the supposed incidents had been witnessed. She then told the court: "You don't stop loving someone just because they beat you up."

Yesterday Mr Knowles said that Miss Port had been lying all along: "This relationship was only four months old. It was hardly of Romeo and Juliet proportions."

Outside court, Miss Port, with her mother and solicitor, spoke of her anger: "I hope the magistrates can go home and sleep at night. Everyone always tries to encourage women to come forward and say when you are being beaten because the courts are there to help you, but they are not. They are only there to help men."

When asked about being branded a liar in court, she said: "I have nothing to be ashamed of. I think it just sums up the whole thing."

"What else could they say but that I lied and exaggerated? I only had my reputation to lose, whereas Phil had his career."



Louise Port outside court: "I hope the magistrates can go home and sleep at night"

Taunted man jailed for killing his wife

A WEALTHY businessman who strangled his wife after she told him that she had had sex in the back of his car with her lover was jailed for three years yesterday.

Michael McKeon snapped when his wife of 34 years taunted him with details of the affair, Worcester Crown Court was told. Jillian McKeon, 52, told her husband their marriage was over and admitted an affair with a family friend.

The court was told that McKeon, a mortgage broker, put his hands around his wife's throat and they struggled, falling to the floor. The struggle lasted barely a few seconds, but the weight of the fall, together with the defendant's hands around her throat, caused Mrs McKeon's "rapid death", the court was told.

McKeon, 56, then called police to the couple's home in Sellack, Herefordshire, after the incident on April 24.

Michael Sayers, QC, for the defence, said the couple's son, Kevin, 23, described his father as a "gentle man" devoted to his mother. McKeon pleaded guilty to manslaughter.

Bad back 'ended dream of stardom'

By JOANNA BALE

A TALENTED young dancer's career was ruined when he injured his back while lifting a female performer during rehearsals for *Aspects of Love*, the High Court was told.

Kevin Woods, who uses the stage name Kevin Andrew, was 21 when he landed the role of principal dancer in a role of the Andrew Lloyd Webber musical. The part demanded a series of complicated and strenuous lifts, a technique in which Mr Woods, who had previously danced in videos and television commercials, had not been trained.

Mr Woods said that he made this clear to the director, Matthew Ryan, and dance captain, Leslie Meadows, and that they promised to give him safety training. But he said this was not given when he was told to hold a dancer above his head with his arms fully extended and also to swing her around his body and over his back.

He had physiotherapy when his back became troublesome during rehearsals. It finally broke down, ending his participation in the show, about three weeks into the run in February 1994. The following year he landed a part in the musical *Chess*, but missed 76 performances because of his back.

The court was told that he continued to try to dance but it involved constant pain and cannot sustain lifting or energetic choreography. His counsel, Charles Pugh, told Judge Kerr that the negligence of the production company, Barry Chapman Concerts Ltd, had brought "to a tragically premature conclusion the dancing career of one of the outstanding prospects in musical theatre".

The company denies negligence and that Mr Woods, of Kennington, South London, was an outstanding prospect. The hearing continues.



Patricia Green: brought case

Blood confusion left boy disabled

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

A MIX-UP over names left a boy severely brain damaged when he was given the wrong blood group, the High Court was told. The case of James Green, now 6, may set a record for compensation.

The boy had jaundice after birth and needed a blood transfusion, said his counsel, Robert Owen, QC. But because of a mix-up with another baby of the same surname, he was given A rhesus negative blood instead of O rhesus positive.

As a result of the mistake at Princess Alexandra Hospital in Harlow, Essex, James has severe cerebral palsy that leaves him unable to control his body and to talk, although his intelligence is not affected.

Mr Owen said that North Essex Health Authority admitted liability last year but agreement had yet to be reached on damages. Similar cases have resulted in payments of up to £4 million, and the final figure could be a record.

The action was brought by James's parents, Dudley and Patricia. Describing James's condition, Mr Owen told Mr Justice Thomas that he was totally dependent on the care of others, but was intelligent and good-humoured. The hearing continues.

WH Smith sex oil proves a little rash

By ROBIN YOUNG

WH SMITH has issued a product recall for a gift pack comprising a pocket-size copy of the *Kama Sutra* and some massage oil. The company, which once refused to stock a pop-up edition of the Indian sex manual, says that the oil might cause a painful rash.

WH Smith's official recall notice says: "The massage oil may cause irritation to sensitive parts of the body and contains a red dye which may stain some fabrics."

A spokeswoman said: "Our research has shown that it may cause irritation to the mucous membranes. I suppose they are found in all the body's orifices."

The company had sold 1,000 packs at £3 each before

the danger was realised. "Any reaction to the oil would be immediate," the company says. "If customers have used it without a reaction, they need not be concerned, but should still return the complete pack to us as a precaution. A full refund will be provided."

The company's recall notice, published on page 13, does not say what customers should do if they have a reaction, but the spokeswoman said: "The irritation that the oil may cause should not be serious enough to make it necessary to consult a doctor, but if symptoms persist they should do so. We do not think the irritation would last long. The effects should wear off quite quickly."



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Youths sow the seeds of a short, unhealthy life

TODAYS youth eat, drink and smoke so much that they can expect only a short and unhealthy life. Medical advances and better living conditions have doubled life expectancy during the past 150 years, but, according to the largest survey of young people undertaken by the Government, so many lead an unhealthy lifestyle that they are heading for an early grave.

Improvements in life expectancy are undermined by smoking and drinking, writes

Ian Murray

The survey among 15 to 24-year-olds found that 23 per cent of young men and 19 per cent of young women were overweight, and 6 per cent and 8 per cent respectively were obese.

was higher than men (25 per cent) but lower at 18 (30 per cent). For men and women aged 20 to 24, the proportion who smoked was more than 40 per cent.

Wee dram 'good for the heart'

BY NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

WHATEVER wine can do, Scotch whisky does better, according to the latest research. A stiff whisky raises the levels of anti-oxidants in the body, which have been shown to protect against coronary heart disease, and although drinking wine has the same effect, it is less pronounced, a study at Rowett Research Institute, Aberdeen, has shown.

11pm the previous night and on the next morning were given either 100ml of red wine, a measure of 12-year-old malt whisky matured in oak and equivalent to four pub measures, or non-matured whisky. They downed their drink within five minutes and a week later switched to one of the other drinks. After another week they repeated the process with the third drink.

week and one third exceeded eight units at least once a week. Among young women, 28 per cent exceeded three units and 13 per cent exceeded six units at least once a week.

A measurement of behavioural, emotional or relationship difficulties in children showed a significant association between low income and poor scores for both boys and girls.

Commenting on the figures, Liam Donaldson, the Chief Medical Officer, said: "The data on young people's health show very similar underlying social determinants, as do the data on health and disease in adulthood."

"Looking at children is very important because of the potential for these characteristics to carry on into adult life, laying the foundations for ill health later in life."

"It's important to get upstream and stop people falling into the river rather than having to pull them out." The findings of the study have prompted the Government to change tack in the way it promotes healthy lifestyles. In future all government departments will be involved in tackling the wider social causes of ill health alongside continuing efforts to address specific issues, such as smoking.



Ben James outside the Court of Appeal yesterday: "All I am asking for is a little bit of compassion," he said.

Abandoned boy who made a success faces deportation

Nigerian left to fend for himself at 14 has been told he cannot stay in Britain, reports Sue Lappeman

A BUSINESSMAN who battled to become a success after being abandoned in Britain as a 14-year-old has lost his fight in the Court of Appeal to prevent his deportation.

Ben James, 29, a commodities dealer, faces arrest and expulsion to Nigeria, where he says he knows no one. Lord Justice Roch and Lord Justice Waller yesterday rejected a renewed bid by Mr James for a judicial review of the Home Secretary's decision to deport him. They also refused him leave to appeal to the House of Lords. His only chance is a final plea to Jack Straw on 'compassionate grounds'.



Ben James soon after he came to school in Britain.

Mr James was sent to Britain by his family on a student visa to attend a private school, but, with his father fearing political persecution, his family refused to let him return home for his own safety. They stopped sending him money and eventually lost contact with him.

and is backed by his local MP, the Health Minister Tessa Jowell. Mr James said: "I have committed no crime and they only found out about me because I was trying to do what was right. I have never attempted to run away." "I am not even looking forward to Christmas because there could be a knock on the door and I could be arrested and locked up. I didn't choose to be left here as a child. I've paid my taxes and employed other people in my business. What more could you ask?" The Home Office has refused to comment. Ms Jowell has pledged support to try to block his deportation. She said: "Ben James's story is tragic and, as his constituency MP, I have made repeated representations on his behalf to the Home Office."

Colleges end cash link with tobacco industry

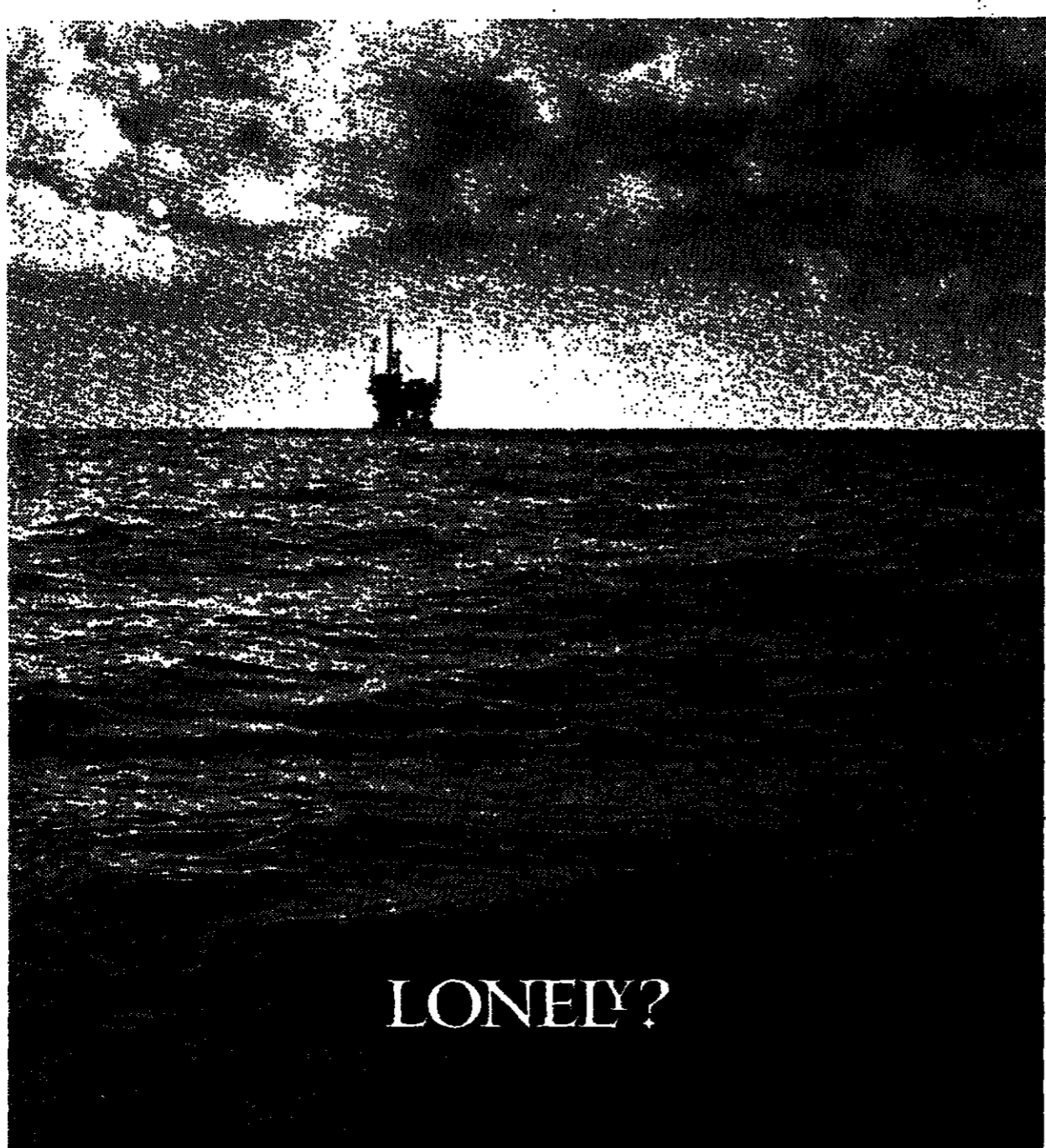
BY IAN MURRAY, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN'S universities have agreed to reject funding into cancer research from the tobacco industry, unless it is donated anonymously. Accepting money from the industry, the universities said, "is not likely to be viewed as disinterested and will consequently damage the university's standing and reputation".

The decision by the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, which represents the heads of all British Universities, means that tobacco manufacturers cannot buy favourable publicity by paying for research.

The committee agreed a protocol with the Cancer Research Campaign yesterday to end any financial involvement with the tobacco industry. The campaign funds £55 million-worth of medical research a year, but from April it is recommended that any funding that gives favourable publicity to a tobacco company and that promotes tobacco use should be rejected, as should money given by the industry for research into tobacco.

Graham Zillick, Vice-Chancellor of London University, said the committee shared with the campaign "its abhorrence of the effects of tobacco products". He said the protocol balanced the concerns of the charity, with those of the universities to maintain their academic freedom. A spokesman for British American Tobacco said that his company spent £1 million a year funding research in Britain, Denmark, Finland and Hungary to try to find the link between tobacco and cancer. "We want to know as much as anyone else what is happening and increase our understanding of smoking behaviour. We need to understand the effects of nicotine, but we never ask for any publicity about research we fund."



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TIMES CHRISTMAS APPEAL

£3.6m to study aspirin remedy for Alzheimer's

BY NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

A £3.6 MILLION study has begun to discover whether aspirin-like drugs can prevent the onset of Alzheimer's disease. Researchers in the United States are hopeful of making a breakthrough, given an earlier Canadian study which found that just 0.39 per cent of people who took such drugs for rheumatoid arthritis developed Alzheimer's, compared to an expected 2.7 per cent.

These observations have been backed up by several studies of painkillers, including ibuprofen, indomethacin and aspirin, but doctors have been unwilling to prescribe them to healthy people because they can cause stomach bleeding and ulcers. The new trial will test the ability of Vioxx, a new type of anti-inflammatory drug with fewer side-effects, to prevent or delay the onset of Alzheimer's.

The older drugs inhibit two enzymes, cyclooxygenase-1 and 2 (cox-1 and cox-2). Inhibiting cox-2 can control the pain of conditions like arthritis, but the older drugs also inhibit cox-1, which protects the stomach lining from digestive acids. The new drugs, however, are more selective in targeting cox-2. The trial will involve 1,300 volunteers, who will each be given either Vioxx or a placebo for two years. The patients will be aged 65 or over and have memory problems which have worsened noticeably in the past year.

should delay Alzheimer's, but there is some evidence that cox-2 plays a part in the death of brain cells. The new generation of cox-2 inhibitors includes Celebra, a Searle drug marketed by Pfizer. Glaxo Wellcome, Johnson & Johnson and Roche also have such drugs at various stages of development.

Leading article, page 17

Alzheimer's Research Trust Appeal

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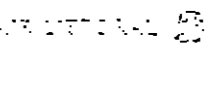
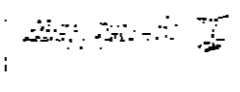
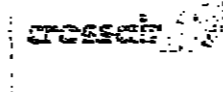
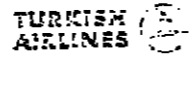


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Over-the-top Hague is taking party further to the fringe

William Hague is rapidly leading his troops away from the European Union. Many will cheer his sceptic drumbeat, but they may find themselves an isolated band, both in Britain and Europe.

His response to the Vienna summit shows how far the Tories are now outside the mainstream debate on Europe. Mr Hague's claim that "Britain now faces the greatest threat to its independence for decades" is ludicrously over the top, and hard for even the most sceptic newspaper to swallow. His comments in the Commons were heard

with obvious dismay by pro-European Tory MPs.

Mr Hague talked of "one currency, one tax policy, one employment policy, one defence policy, one legal area, one state. No longer would this be a Europe of nation states. The creation of a single European state is in prospect." That will no doubt send shivers down the spines of Tory activists, but it is a long way away from what was actually discussed, let alone agreed, at Vienna.

The Tories can fairly argue that Tony Blair has not been fully candid about further integration, but

that does not mean that a super-state is about to be created. Europe is likely to remain as messy and diverse as ever. By using extreme language, Mr Hague undermines his valid attempt to pin the Government down.

Take defence as an example. Michael Howard, the Shadow Foreign Secretary, accused the Government of being "intent on signing Britain up to the principle of a single defence policy. In doing so, they are putting the future of Nato — and therefore Britain's security — at risk." In reality, what is being discussed is the ability to take mili-

tary action in regional crises in which the United States or Nato as a whole does not wish to be engaged. There are likely to be situations where European forces may have to work together and where the United States may not be willing to commit ground forces — such as the situation in Kosovo. Europe currently lacks the ability or the logistical resources to mount such operations on its own. The British-French ideas need fleshing out, but Washington has welcomed them and not seen them as a threat to Nato.

Mr Hague can argue that he is presenting a clear vision of a flexible, outward-looking deregulated Europe whose main focus is the single market. But, as he concedes, the European agenda is different not just the single currency, but also moves to increase co-ordination of economic policy and deal with tax distortions. Not all these proposals are welcomed in Britain and there will be battles over social and employment policies.

There are two possible ways for the Tories to react. The first is to be actively involved in negotiations, accepting that compromises may have to be reached in order to influence policy in Britain's interests. The second is to attack proposals as a fundamental threat to Britain, and lose all influence over what happens. That is the danger now for the Tories. Mr Blair had much fun yesterday teasing them over

their shortage of allies in the EU. Most Christian Democrat and centre-right parties, such as those in Spain and Sweden — let alone the Benelux countries — are closer to the Blair Government than to the Tories.

Momentous decisions lie ahead on whether Britain should join the single currency. Mr Hague will speak for a substantial number in opposing entry. But he has yet to explain how a Tory-led Britain could be a successful and harmonious member of the EU. His current approach would take Britain to the margins of Europe.



Peter Riddell ON POLITICS



Peter Mandelson yesterday, wants Trade Department officials to feel more loved

Mandelson tries a little tenderness with his troops

By Valerie Elliott, Whitehall Editor

PETER MANDELSON yesterday launched an astonishing charm offensive to win over his 9,000 civil servants.

After six months in the Cabinet, the Trade and Industry Secretary told *The Times* that he wanted his officials to feel "more loved" and for them to "share his happiness" at being at the helm of a frontline economic department. In his first interview to discuss the changes he is planning for the department, Mr Mandelson comes over as a surprisingly generous boss. He knows that he must enlist the full support of staff at the DTI — a department which he says has been "an ideological battleground" under successive secretaries — if he is to make it a strong voice for business.

He hints too that he is also treating Cabinet colleagues in a human fashion and vigorously denies charges that he had spent the previous year keeping tabs on them.

"My experience in the Cabinet Office helped me to see how much more effective are the Cabinet ministers who treat their colleagues with respect, openness and consideration," he said. Mr Mandelson declined to name the more sensitive colleagues, but said that there was little anyone could teach John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, about being nice.

Inside the DTI, he expects officials to become more imaginative and creative, and has turned convention on its head by firing off a submission to his permanent secretary on "how we can make people feel motivated, more loved, better trained, listened to and encouraged". He has also set up an e-mail address for staff to send him ideas or grievances.

Mr Mandelson said that his stint as Minister Without Portfolio made him conscious of the efforts of officials "I wanted around the building. Some people think that is strange. But there is a very nice atmosphere in this department and I like being here. There is a bit of me that wants to share my happiness," he said. "I want to champion the Civil Service and to stand up for it. The greatest enjoyment I have had is working with civil servants."

"The best ones are challenging, irreverent, humorous and good fun to be with. And what I like is that everyone knows at the end of the day who is the boss in policy terms."

Mr Mandelson is to set up a new enterprise unit in the DTI in the New Year, which will monitor all departmental policies to check their relevance and usefulness for business. He has also decided to appoint another insider as enforcer for his White Paper on competitiveness (to be released tomorrow).

"Too often ministers spend months writing a White Paper, a day launching it and within days it has faded into the background. I won't allow that to happen," he said.

Tax relief boost for employee share schemes

WORKERS will get extra tax incentives the longer they hold on to company shares under reforms to boost employee share schemes being drawn up by the Chancellor for the Budget in March.

Minimum time limits may also be imposed on share option or savings schemes before employees can get tax relief, under ideas which the Treasury is considering. Whitehall sources point out that at present many people cash in their shares soon after they have been given them, immediately losing their stake in the firm and the incentive to work harder.

Ministers are also keen to encourage all workers to take up share options as at present many schemes are set up only for senior executives.

Gordon Brown has said he wants to double the number of people who now invest in the company they work for after evidence that productivity rises where staff have company shares. At present one million employees have shares in the firm they work for.

Studies undertaken in America and France show that companies are more successful where a high proportion of employees own shares.

On Friday, Patricia Hewitt, the Economic Secretary, will publish a consultation paper setting out the Government's aims to get more people to take

Reforms should give workers extra incentives to take up options, writes Jill Sherman

up share options and hold on to their shares. "This is an important part of Gordon Brown's agenda for closing the productivity gap, in particular by enabling employees to take a long-term stake in the company for which they work," Ms Hewitt told *The Times* last night.

The paper is unlikely to go into detail but it will suggest that further tax incentives are necessary to widen share ownership. It will invite proposals for the best way of encouraging people to hold on to their shares before drawing up firm proposals before the Budget.

The Government already offers some tax relief for share option schemes but Whitehall sources made clear that in future minimum time limits could be imposed on share holdings before tax relief was given. "We want to look at a whole range of tax regulations," one source said. "But in America and France there is a requirement for a minimum period of holding."

Under the most popular scheme, Save as you Earn, only a third of participants hold on to their savings for any length of time. Whitehall sources point to the profit-sharing scheme where shares are given to the staff free or at reduced prices and held in trust by the employer.

Tax relief is only given after the shares have been held for three years. Although this scheme is very limited the Government is now said to be looking at ways of redesigning it to provide stronger incentives for long-term shareholding for all employees.

Mr Brown is also keen to look at specific schemes to attract managers to small businesses and to encourage them to stay. About 900 companies currently give employees shares as part of a profit-sharing scheme and 1,400 offer employees the chance to save to buy shares at a discount.

Mr Brown signalled his intentions in his pre-Budget statement last month. The Chancellor is convinced that if people have a stake in their company they will have an incentive to work harder.

But he is also keen to offer incentives for people to save. Last March he announced changes to capital gains tax so that people had to pay less tax the longer they held assets.

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Irvine sees end to 'fat cat' aid fees

By Frances Gibb, Legal Correspondent

AN END to "fat cat" legal aid fees was signalled by Lord Irvine yesterday as he launched his review of legal aid, the courts and lawyers.

He said that the new contracts that will be awarded to law firms that provide a specialist, quality service had to be based on fair rates or there would be no takers. But he said the State could not match "the huge rates some lawyers command in the private sector, where the prices charged may be vast and represent what the market will bear in litigation where often huge sums are at stake."

Nor, he added, did the State need to pay such rates to dedicated lawyers committed to the public good. "They should be content with fair pay for socially satisfying work."

Lord Irvine was speaking in the Lords at the second reading of his Access to Justice Bill which replaces the £1.6 billion legal aid scheme with a community legal service and a criminal defence service. Lawyers providing publicly funded legal services will work to fixed-price contracts and be obliged to meet criteria on standards and expertise. It also provides for "no win, no fee" work for middle-income groups to be extended to disputes between divorcing couples over property.

The Bill scraps the remaining restrictive practices in the legal profession and will allow all lawyers, including Crown Prosecutors, to present cases in all courts, subject to training. Lord Irvine said: "I do not believe it is right for lawyers to be denied rights of audience in court simply because they are employed, and I will ask Parliament to endorse that principle. A lawyer who is employed and salaried is not on that account ethically deficient."

Between 1997-98, spending on civil and family legal aid rose from £330 million to £634 million, a rise of 92 per cent. But the number of people helped fell by 10 per cent, he said. On the criminal side, 1 per cent of cases consumed 40-50 per cent of the criminal legal aid budget.

"Legal aid is for the benefit of the public, not interested groups," Lord Irvine said.

Interview, page 37

Referendum cap angers sceptics

By Jill Sherman, Chief Political Correspondent

CAMPAIGNERS against the single currency have reacted angrily to evidence that Jack Straw may limit the amount of money that can be spent on referendum campaigns.

The Neill Committee on Standards in Public Life proposed a £20 million limit on general election spending but steered clear of suggesting a cap for referendums.

Last month the Home Secretary made clear that he was unhappy about some aspects of Lord Neill of Bladen's report, particularly his recommendation that the Government should be neutral in referendum campaigns.

But last night Home Office sources suggested that Mr Straw was now actively drawing up plans to curb spending in an attempt to create a level playing-field for the referendum on the euro which is expected during the next Parliament.

A Home Office spokesman said that Mr Straw was considering his response to Lord Neill's recommendations on party funding, and would publish the Government's proposals in a draft Bill before the summer recess. But sources indicated that the Home Secretary was spending limits for all party funding, including referendum campaigns.

He and his colleagues are aware that the Eurosceptic campaign will have huge resources to draw upon unless a cap is imposed. Paul Sykes, the millionaire Eurosceptic who formed the Democracy after a merger with the Referendum Movement last night criticised Mr Straw's move.

Mr Sykes who has already paid £2 million to kick-start the anti-euro campaign by sending out millions of leaflets on January 1, has said he will pledge as much as £20 million to stop Britain signing up to a single currency.

"If the taxpayer is limited on providing factual information on the impact of the euro we must no longer be living in a democracy," Mr Sykes said last night. He said the Government had already funded a multimillion-pound television campaign to advertise the benefits of the single currency and that Brussels had been mounting a "propaganda campaign" for more than 20 years.

Tory peers defiant on PR Bill

TORY peers will today mount a dramatic and potentially final act of defiance against government plans to introduce proportional representation for the European elections.

In a move which could make constitutional history, Tory lords will attempt to take the rare step of rejecting the Bill at second reading, forcing the Government to see the measure pushed through under the Parliament Act, which allows a Government to push a Bill on to the statute book without the consent of the Lords, a power invoked only four times this century.

If the European Parliamentary Elections Bill is rejected today, it is entirely feasible for it to receive Royal Assent and become law on Thursday afternoon when Parliament breaks for Christmas. Despite Downing Street's claims last week that Tory peers had agreed a deal with ministers to allow the Bill through by January, the Opposition has repeatedly promised to challenge the Bill to the bitter end. If Tory peers vote to reject the Bill today, they will effectively get the Government off the hook and give ministers the measure much earlier than expected.

If the Tories had continued to filibuster the Bill throughout the new year, the Government might have been forced to hold the June poll under the first-past-the-post system.

The Tories are expected to pull out all the stops and summon as many backbench peers as possible to win the vote. "We are trying very hard," one whip said. Government sources said no decision had yet been taken over how their peers will vote. If the Tories lose the vote, the Bill will proceed as usual and will almost certainly become law by the end of January.

The vehicle for the Tory protest is a reasoned amendment which repeats the charge that the Bill would restrict voter choice and hand power to party apparatchiks. They want the electorate to be able to vote for individual candidates from open lists. The Government prefers the closed-list system in which voters determine how many seats a party wins, but the parties choose who fills them.

The Opposition's tactics offer benefits to both sides. For the Tories, it allows them to stannish their principled protest, and the use of the Parliament Act will allow them to claim that the Government never won the argument. They can also scotch claims that they had agreed to give the Government a free ride.

The vote, the first for Lord Strathclyde since he took over from Viscount Cranborne as Tory leader in the Lords, will be a morale-boosting measure. For the Government, the tactic is likely to give ministers the Bill much earlier than expected. "What is important is that the Bill gets on the statute book. How it gets there is irrelevant," a spokesman said.

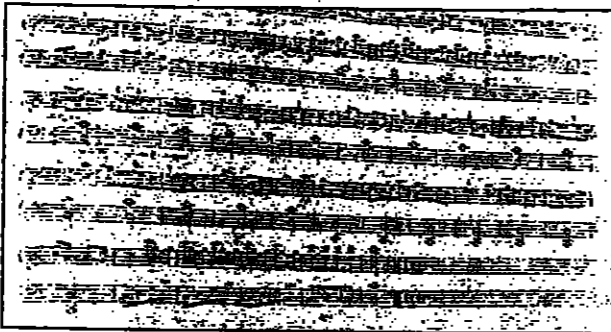
England lays claim to Auld Lang Tyne

Robert Burns put words to a Gateshead tune, reports Paul Wilkinson

ROBERT BURNS has long been celebrated for penning the words to *Auld Lang Syne*, but it now seems that the man who wrote the tune was an Englishman.

While Burns is believed to have heard the tune first while travelling in Scotland in 1788, it appears that the music was written five years earlier by the Gateshead-born composer William Shield as part of his little-known operetta *Rosina*. The score was unearthed in the archives of the Tyneside town's library by John Treharne, Gateshead's head of school music services.

"I was looking for something different and decided to pull something out from the late 18th century because much of the repertoire from that era is tuneless and simply scored," he said. "I thought it was appropriate to look at the work of a Gateshead-born composer and I picked out *Rosina*.
"I started to copy out the score and hummed the tune as I was writing it down. I was coming to the end when I realised the tune floating through my head was *Auld Lang Syne*. I stopped what I was doing and laughed out loud: The melody is absolutely unmistakable."
"Its origins have never been particularly clear. Of course



Part of the score of Shield's opera *Rosina*, showing the refrain better known as *Auld Lang Syne*

Robert Burns wrote the words — most people know that and it would never be disputed. But the tune has never been credited to anyone so far as I am aware.

"Back in the 18th century there were no copyright laws so people wrote music and often subconsciously filled in their own pieces with parts borrowed from other people's work. That is why the origins of many tunes known today are unclear."

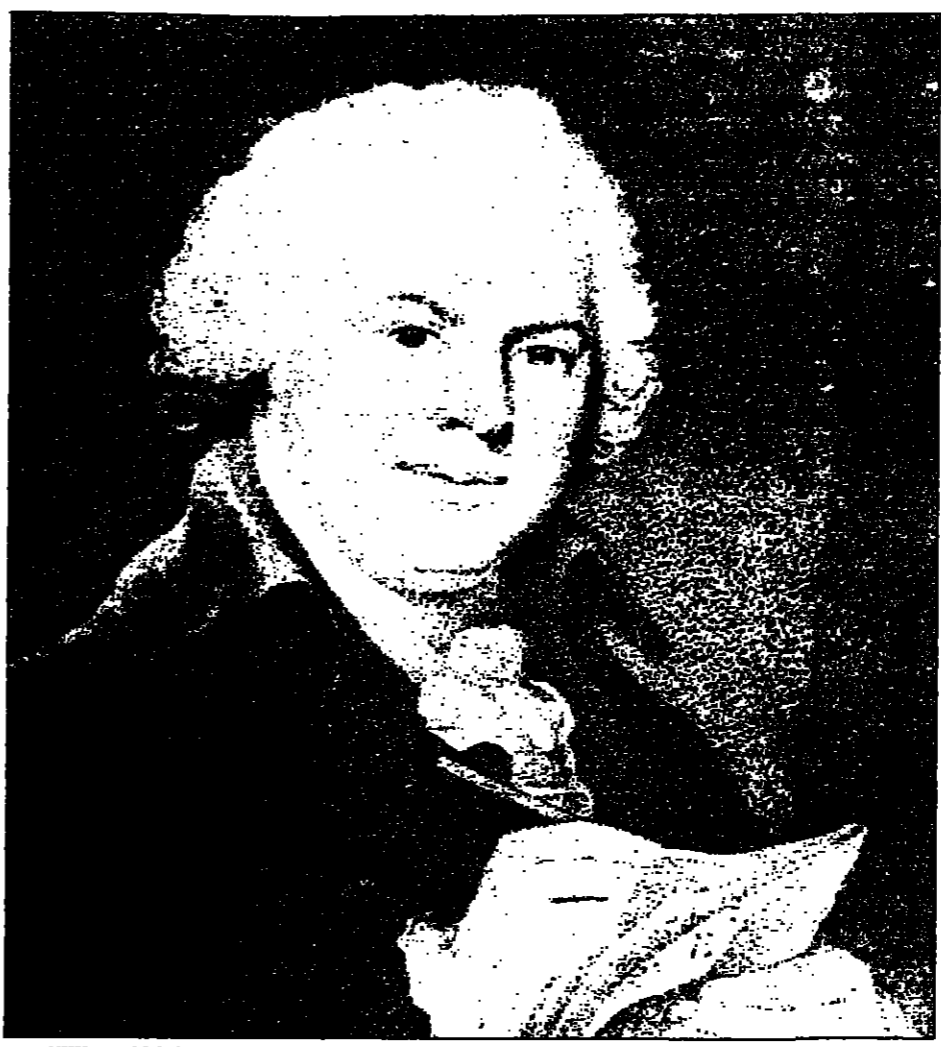
Shield, the son of a singing master, was born in 1748 in Co Durham and raised in Swallow, near Gateshead. Although he took up the violin, as a child, he became an apprentice to a shipbuilder. He continued to play his fiddle and was noticed by an Italian

composer who persuaded him to move to London. There he became one of the most noted composers and musicians of his day, writing 40 light operas, as well as musical farces, songs and pieces for strings. He became Master of the King's Music in 1817 and was buried in 1829 at Musicians' Corner at Westminster Abbey. Although Burns and Shield never met, *Coming Through*

The Rye is also a combination of their respective words and music.

Sid Henderson, Gateshead council's chairman of libraries and arts, said: "We are very proud to have William Shield's name associated with one of the world's most famous tunes. We would never try to detract from the fact that Burns wrote the words, but it is only fair that the creator of the music gets a share of the recognition. Maybe in Gateshead we could call it *Auld Lang Tyne* from now on."

A spokesman for the The Burns Federation, Murdo Morrison, said yesterday: "It is a piece of pure speculation, but I am sure the people in Gateshead feel they have a very strong case. The music could well have been written by William Shield.
"Whoever wrote the tune, it has certainly become universally known. I understand they use it as a warning on pedestrian crossings in Japan."



William Shield: an apprentice shipbuilder who became Master of the King's Music

Heroin link causes a stir at McDonald's

By Sue Lappeman

THE hamburger chain McDonald's is withdrawing its plastic spoons throughout Britain after learning that heroin addicts use them to measure their heroin.

A spokeswoman said that flat, wooden stirrers were being phased in to replace the plastic spoons, partly because of advice from police that they were being found in the possession of drug dealers.

The dealers were said to prefer using the 100-milligram spoons rather than scales to measure drugs because the scales were incriminating.

McDonald's began substituting flat stirrers for the spoons three months ago. The spokeswoman said that detectives had reportedly found the spoons in the homes of suspected drug dealers during a series of raids last week.

"There was a design change in the stirrers a few months ago. The use by drug dealers was one of the issues we were looking at after consultation with police," the spokeswoman said.

Bible left unread in most homes

By Ruth Gledhill, Religion Correspondent

MOST adults have a copy of the Bible at home, but nearly all say they never read it, according to a survey published today.

Research commissioned by the Bible Society indicates that more than 30 million people have a Bible in their home, and six out of ten adults claim personally to own one.

Nearly 3,000 adults were interviewed in three surveys published by the Scripture Union, one of Britain's largest Christian charities, which exists to promote Christianity in Britain. The results, which are being published in preparation for the launch of a Bible-based magazine next spring, were extrapolated from the three surveys, one of which involved fewer than 1,000 people.

Most of the Bibles people said they owned were the Authorised Version, the *Good News Bible* and the *New English Bible* were also popular.

The findings indicate that 3 per cent of the adult population — 1.3 million people — reads something from the Bible every day, with 2 per cent reading it several times a week and 13 per cent reading it once in the past year. More than 60 per cent of adults would seem not to have read anything from the Bible in the past year.

"We are delighted that so many people own so many Bibles," Peter Kimber, the union's chief executive, said. "But what is the point of keeping it on the shelf when it is probably the most important book anyone should read?"

The new Bible magazine, which has not been named, will be aimed at 20 to 40-year-olds who rarely read books but often buy magazines. It will contain guides to prayer, Bible readings and a readers' letters page.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Youth on run dies in crash

A 15-year-old boy, who died yesterday when a stolen car in which he was a passenger crashed into a tree, had fled from Ayldiffe Young Offender Institution hours earlier with two other teenagers after a guard was attacked and keys stolen. David Brook, of Pontefract, Yorkshire, was pronounced dead at the scene of the crash near Rusbyford, Co Durham. The other teenagers, aged 14 and 15, were taken to hospital for treatment to minor injuries, and arrested.

Ex-teacher loses

A former teacher who was hit on the head by a basketball thrown by a pupil has lost her High Court action for damages. Anne Elkesidge, of St Leonards, East Sussex, suffered headaches and nosebleeds after the incident in April 1994.

Knife attacker

A steelworker stabbed his boss after failing to get promotion. David Parr, 31, of Coleford, Gloucestershire, admitted attempted murder. He was held under the Mental Health Act after Cardiff Crown Court was told he had manic depression.

Nimmo improves

Derek Nimmo, the comedian, who has been unconscious since falling downstairs at his home in Kensington, southwest London, almost two weeks ago, is slowly emerging from his coma and has started to move his arms and legs.

Oldest cat home

A 31-year-old cat that could be Britain's oldest has been rehomed with a Gloucestershire woman by the Cats Protection League, which had more than 100 offers of help. Smokey's owner died and his widow was too ill to look after it.

European hospitality has many faces.



BUILDING SOCIETIES ACT 1986

Notice under paragraph 7 of Schedule 17 to the Act

Notice is hereby given that Birmingham Midshires Building Society, Register No. 7388, whose principal office is at Reddford Business Park, Wobaston Road, Wolverhampton WV9 5HZ, desires to transfer its business to Halifax plc, and that the society has applied to the Building Societies Commission to confirm the transfer.

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The Quality Group



Woody Allen says Bob Hope became lazy when he abandoned the Hollywood film world for television

Small screen 'stunted Hope's talent'

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

WOODY ALLEN has pricked the legend of Bob Hope by complaining that the 95-year-old British-born comedian, one of the last survivors from Hollywood's Golden Age, became lazy when he turned from film to television.

The neurotic comedian tells *The New Yorker* magazine that it was seeing Hope's *Road to Morocco* with his mother that inspired him to go into film, and that Hope's comedy had a seminal influence on his own screen persona. Allen compares Hope's delivery to

that of Groucho Marx, but limits his praise to Hope's work on the big screen, before he began a TV career in 1950 that produced 284 prime-time shows.

"In other media, particularly television, he was not very good," Allen tells the drama critic, John Lahr. "He was lazy, and nobody cared. He would come out and do these old-fashioned sketches, and after a while he was unashamedly reading from cards. It was just awful."

Hope recently announced the donation of his archive of jokes, radio broadcasts, TV appearances, photographs and film scripts, to the US Library of Congress and promised \$3.5 million to maintain a Bob Hope Gallery of American Entertainment. Over the past 50 years Hope employed 88 joke-writers, sometimes 13 at a time, who furnished him with more than one million gags.

In the profile, Melville Shavelson, who wrote and directed some of his best films, says Hope usually played himself. "We never told Bob this — we took his own characteristics and exaggerated them. The woman-chaser, the coward, the cheap guy, we just put them in. He thought he was playing a character. He was playing, really, the real Bob Hope."

Impeaching me 'is against US interests'

Bronwen Maddox on the Clinton appeal to patriotism

IN AN attempt to head off the constitutional crisis engulfing his office, President Clinton said yesterday that his impeachment would be against the interest of the United States.

"I don't believe it's in the interest of the US and the American people to go through this impeachment process and have a trial in the Senate," he said before his meeting with Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, in the Gaza Strip.

Despite the rising tension in Washington before Thursday's historic debate by the full House of Representatives on whether to impeach the President, aides said there was "no chance" that Mr Clinton would be cutting short his trip to the Middle East to drum up support at home.

Instead, in a manoeuvre dubbed "the split-screen presidency", it has fallen to Vice-President Al Gore to act as the figurehead of the Clinton defence. Asked yesterday whether the President would resign, he retorted: "Of course, that will not happen."

Sticking to the White House's main line of attack, Mr Gore accused the House Judiciary Committee, which has approved four articles of impeachment against Mr Clinton, for "defying the wisdom and will of the American people" in rejecting the option of censure.

But like the President, Mr

Gore said that he was not making personal phone calls to the two dozen moderate Republicans who hold the outcome of the impeachment vote in their hands, and who could tip the Republican-controlled House against impeachment.

The White House is afraid that explicit lobbying would backfire. But behind the scenes, Mr Clinton's lawyers were mounting an energetic bid to sway the moderates, offering to meet any congressman who remain undecided.

The full House of Representatives, recalled specially this week, begins debating the four articles on Thursday, and Republican leaders are pressing for a vote before the week is out. If a majority of the 435 House members votes against impeachment, the year-long Monica Lewinsky saga dies there.

But if the House impeaches Mr Clinton — the equivalent of indicting him — the Senate will then begin a trial to decide whether to remove him from office. Predicting the course of

that trial has become Washington's latest parlour game.

On present counts, any vote against Mr Clinton would fall far short of the two-thirds majority needed to remove him. Senate Republicans are privately furious with their House colleagues for having tossed the political grenade to the other side of Capitol Hill, leaving them to decide whether to improvise a way of curtailing the debate, such as censure, or to inflict a long draw-out trial on the country.

The Clinton defence team has played to those fears, predicting that a trial would last until late summer, traumatise the country, paralyse the legislature, and rock stock market confidence.

Senior Republicans mock those fears. Asa Hutchinson, a judiciary committee member, yesterday declared that "estimates thrown out there about the length of a trial are designed to intimidate the country. I do not believe it would take more than about a month — perhaps even shorter than that."

For the moment, White House assurances that the President will not resign under this pressure — including his own declaration this week — are taken at face value. Mr Clinton, who has repeatedly demonstrated his claim to the tag of the Comeback Kid during a career of many reversals, is not known as a quitter.

It's up to you New Yorkers

BY DAMIAN WHITWORTH IN WASHINGTON

THE White House, fighting a rear-guard action to save the President from impeachment in Thursday's historic vote, has distilled its message down to a snatch of Frank Sinatra: *It's up to you, New York*.

Mr Clinton's fate is in the hands of a small band of moderate Republicans who are undecided. Between a third and a quarter are from the state of New York. While New York City has a Republican mayor and the state has many Republicans in Congress, it is known as the Democratic State during presidential elections.

Republicans are aware of Mr Clinton's popularity and fear that a vote in favour of try-



Republicans Benjamin Gilman, left, and Peter King have both said they will vote against impeachment

ing him in the Senate could be electoral suicide.

The state's Republican senator and scourge of the President, Alfonse D'Amato, was kicked out last month. Of the 228 Republicans in the 435-seat House of Representatives, five have said they will vote against impeachment. Three are from New York, including Peter King, who has approved of the President's work on Northern Ireland.

Others under pressure include Benjamin Gilman, chairman of the International Rela-

tions Committee, the moderate Sue Kelly, Michael Forbes, whose district includes the Hamptons, and Sherwood Boehlert who has voted for Clinton measures in the past.

The one likely to encounter the greatest lobbying is Rick Lazio, he has been travelling with the President in the Middle East. He said it had not been "appropriate" to bring up the subject of impeachment. But there will be plenty of time as Air Force One heads for Washington and the fight of Mr Clinton's life.

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Puerto Rico will not be 51st state

FROM DAVID ADAMS IN MIAMI

FOR the third time in recent years, Puerto Ricans went to the polls last weekend to define their ambiguous island status, and were unable to decide between full integration with the United States and maintaining the status quo of commonwealth.

After Puerto Rico's Government mounted the strongest campaign so far in favour of union, the vote represented a defeat for those who would like to see the island become America's 51st state. Although 46.5 per cent supported "statehood", 50.2 per cent voted against any of the options in the ballot.

Those who favour preserving the island's current system, a blend of Spanish-speaking culture and a US political system, claimed victory. "The people have spoken and said that they do not want to be annexed by the United States; that we want our culture, our language and our identity," said Antonio Colorado, an opposition leader who supports the commonwealth system.

Sunday's referendum had been derided by opponents of statehood as little more than a beauty contest because it was not binding on Congress. Even so, the result could serve to put pressure on the US Congress to try to resolve the issue. Although Puerto Ricans enjoy US citizenship, they have no political representation in Congress and are not entitled to vote in American presidential elections.

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Trover: children saw through her disguise

Suicide teacher killed husband

BY DAMIAN WHITWORTH

A HIGH-SCHOOL teacher who was having an affair with the principal tied up her children, killed her husband and claimed the culprit was a masked intruder who had also raped her. When police began to suspect her, she committed suicide.

Police believe that the bloody events in the small town of Gillette on the plains of Wyoming had been planned by Cheryl Trover for months. But when she botched the murder and was on the verge of being caught, she was overcome with guilt.

The maths teacher, 37, had returned home from a night out with friends and her husband, John, when she killed him.

Pulling on a ski mask, she attempted to disguise her voice and bound her son and daughter with rope. She shot her husband twice as he stood in his underwear, then slit his throat and stabbed him in the heart with his hunting knife. She later told police how she had fled from a dark-skinned intruder, and run naked and terrified into the night.

But she blundered. First, her children, aged 13 and 11, recognised the person who tied them up as their mother, thinking she was playing a game with them. Then police suspected that cigar burns on her body were self-inflicted and the tests for a sexual assault were inconclusive. Details she offered were confusing. When police found the gun at her lover's house she shot herself with a friend's rifle.

Police believe Mrs Trover feared a divorce would cost her custody of Torrey, 13, and Jackson, 11. John Riley, principal of Campbell County High School, was apparently unaware of her scheme, police said.

Clinton warms to Palestine state

The President's sentiments were acclaimed as policy in Gaza City, writes Christopher Walker

PRESIDENT CLINTON, affectionately nicknamed Uncle Sam by Palestinians, yesterday came closer than any previous US leader to recognising indirectly their eventual right to an independent state.

Combined with a dose of wishful thinking among the one million residents of the Gaza Strip, one of the most overcrowded spots on Earth, Mr Clinton's first visit to territory controlled by Yasser Arafat boosted feverish Palestinian hopes for statehood to a new intensity.

President Clinton told an historic meeting of the Palestine National Council, the supreme decision-making body of the Palestine Liberation Organisation: "I am proudly honoured to be the first American President to address the Palestinian people in a city governed by Palestinians."

'Palestinians have the chance to determine their own destiny'

Clinton, who pledged to seek from Congress a huge aid package for the Palestinians next year, added: "America wants you to succeed and we will help you create the society you deserve."

The grueling, seven-hour trip to the impoverished Gaza Strip was heavy with symbolism, which belied repeated attempts by Clinton aides to deny that it implied support for Palestinian claims to a state with east Jerusalem as its capital. These are being resisted by the right-wing Israeli Government of Benjamin Netanyahu.

From the minute that the presidential helicopter Marine One touched down to a red carpet welcome at the newly-opened Gaza International Airport, in contradiction of Israeli requests for a more subdued form of arrival, it was clear that Palestinian-American relations have undergone a sea change with profound significance for the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Giant US and Palestinian flags decorated airport buildings which have sprouted on land that, only four years ago, was still under Israeli military rule, and the absence of the Palestinian national anthem from the band's repertoire — as requested by the American advance team, wary of Israeli sensitivities — did nothing to dampen convictions that a state of Palestine was in the making.

"Today's date will go down in history as the day the United States gave de facto recognition of a Palestinian state," Uri Savir, the former Israeli peace negotiator, told Israel radio. "They have achieved something profound with this."



Yasser Arafat and his wife, Suha, lead the Palestinian welcome to President and Hillary Clinton at Gaza International Airport yesterday

spectrum, agreed: "There is no doubt that this visit strengthens the Palestinian demand of statehood and so it is terrible for us."

"The fact that President Clinton landed there with a helicopter is significant recognition of this."

David Bar-Ilan, Mr Netanyahu's communications director, accused the Palestinians of twisting the significance of the visit to serve their own interests. "There has always been a

danger that the trip would be truncated and perverted into an implicit recognition of Palestinian sovereignty," he said. Few Gazans had forgotten that only recently Hillary Clinton — who accompanied her husband and had a testing programme of her own in the fly-blown Shabi refugee camp, a hotbed of Islamic militancy — came out publicly in favour of self-determination for the Palestinians. Yesterday President Clinton, conducting what secu-

rity experts were agreed was by far the riskiest diplomatic mission of his presidency, reinforced the received diplomatic wisdom that her remarks were no slip of the tongue and rather mirrored his own private opinion.

The Palestinian armoured cars parked strategically in some of the eight sprawling Gaza refugee camps and the anxious faces of the US Secret Service agents were reminders that there were those who are

still violently anti-American, with Islamic militants calling for President Clinton's assassination. However, they were in the minority.

Thousands of posters deliberately echoed the words of the assassinated black rights leader, Martin Luther King, and showed a beaming President Clinton giving a thumbs-up and Mr Arafat flashing a V for Victory sign beneath the slogan: "Welcome. We have a dream. Free Palestine."

Others, which were posted close to squalid refugee homes and stinking puddles of raw sewage, said: "The people of peace welcome the leader of peace."

Marwan Kanfani, the chief spokesman for Mr Arafat, summed up the feelings of most ordinary Palestinians in declaring: "Whether somebody likes it or not, we are an independent nation."

Leading article, page 17

Arabic press lends support

FROM MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN NICOSIA

THE Gaza visit of President Clinton was welcomed by many Arab commentators as recognition of a fledgling Palestinian state and a timely shot in the arm for the peace process. But it received scant support from Syria, a key regional player whose involvement is central to any Middle East settlement.

State-run newspapers in Syria, which opposes the Oslo peace accords, said that President Clinton's trip was a ploy to deflect attention from impeachment. Amendments to the Palestinian Charter would not survive, even if guaranteed by Washington, they said. "The majority of the Palestinian people reject these amendments, which contain the seeds of their own destruction because they entrench injustice, aggression and occupation," said the daily *Tishrin*.

The 22-member Arab League said Mr Clinton's Middle East visit was needed to give impetus to negotiations. Esmat Abdel Meguid, the organisation's secretary-general, said: "We believe it will be an important step [for the implementation of the Wye River accord] and we welcome it."

In Lebanon, where Palestinians in sprawling refugee camps reportedly marked the occasion by burning American and Israeli flags, there was praise for Mr Clinton from an otherwise sceptical commentator in *The Daily Star*. "Mr Netanyahu will use every pretext to nullify the Wye Plantation agreement. The outcome of the visit is anybody's guess," he said, but continued: "We cannot, however, fault President Clinton for lack of effort, courage and determination."

Visit brings hope to refugees

WHEN President Clinton arrived in Gaza City yesterday a thin ray of hope penetrated the gloomy recesses of the United Nations Beach camp for Palestinian refugees.

The grandchildren of Palestinians who fled to the Gaza Strip during the 1948 war gathered along the Mediterranean shore and spoke with guarded confidence about the future.

Most said that Mr Clinton, by becoming the first American President to stand on Pal-

Ross Dunn finds new optimism among Palestinians in Gaza City

estinian-ruled soil, had raised their hopes of an independent state one day, with Jerusalem as its capital.

Abed Hanouna, 16, said Palestinians shared the same desire as Jews to worship at their holy shrines. "We would like to see Clinton again, when we pray in Jerusalem," he said. Emad Abud Ghuben, 19, a

resident of the Beach camp, said that Mr Clinton might be less biased towards Israel after viewing the plight of the Palestinians first hand.

"America is the mother of Israel," he said amid children waving US flags. "[So far] he has not given us any help. But I think it is very nice that he is here. It is wonderful for him."

But Mr Clinton was not taken to any of the refugee camps and was sheltered from most ordinary residents such as Abdul Malik Ostaz, who put up a poster outside his photographic studio to welcome him.

Mr Ostaz said he was under no illusions that the visit would change his life overnight. A child refugee of the 1948 war, his brand of hope is as faded as the family portraits on the walls of his shop.

Pressed about his feelings on Mr Clinton's visit, he paused and said: "It's OK. I hope it's good for peace."

Mr Ostaz, 52, was two when his family fled the town of Ashkelon, now part of the modern state of Israel. After living in Syria and Saudi Arabia, they settled in Gaza City, among the rows of roughly finished cement-block buildings built on sandy terrain.

The accords with Israel this year have allowed some Palestinian officials in Gaza to tap into the millions of pounds of aid. But most of it has failed to reach men such as Mr Ostaz.

"Palestine is closed, Gaza is closed — like a prison," he shrugged. Still he hopes for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state to change the lives of his people.

But if Mr Ostaz has any doubts that there will be such a state, Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, apparently does not.

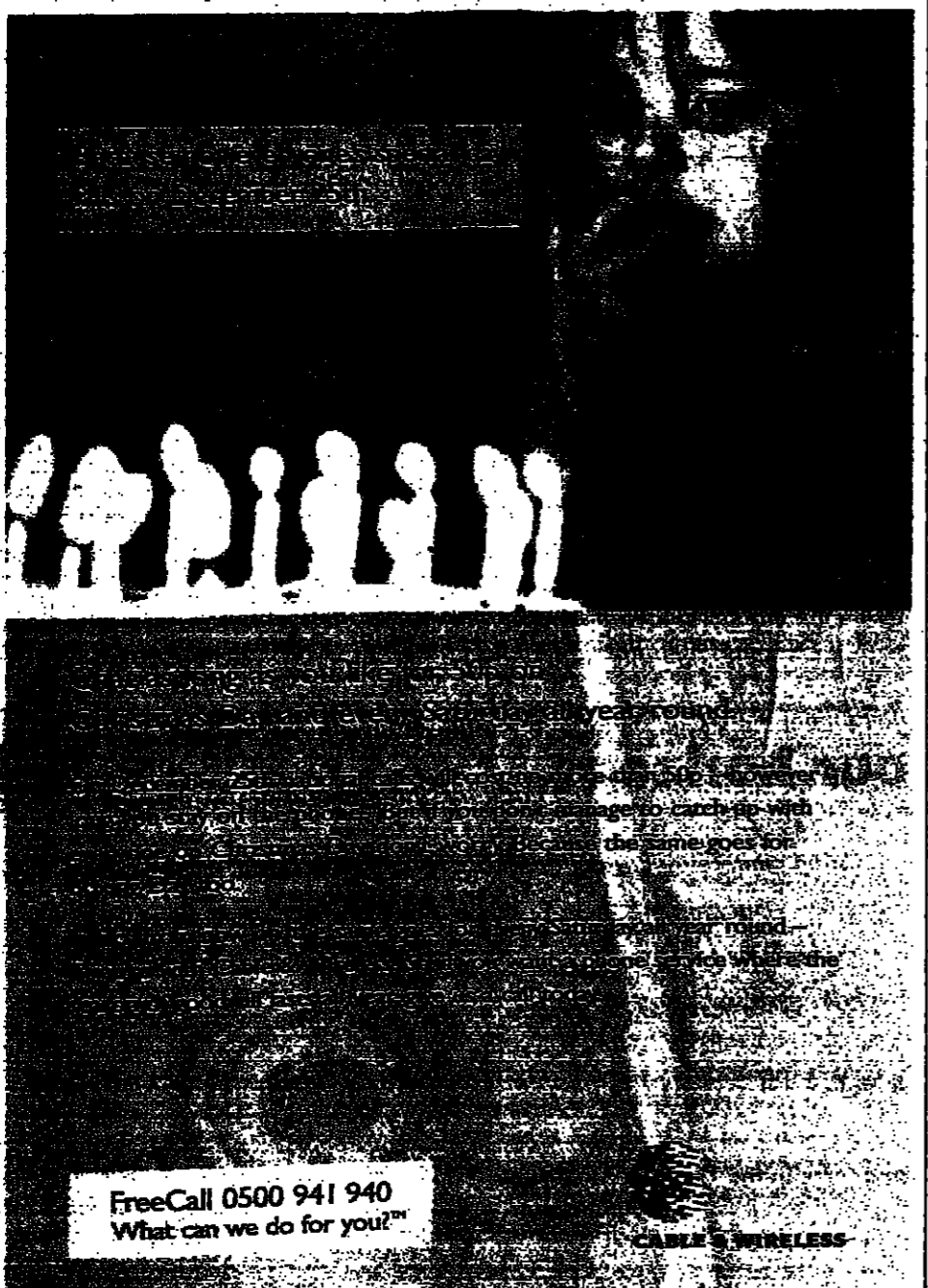
Hanging from the buildings of Gaza City were huge posters proclaiming, "We have a dream — Free Palestine", with pictures of Mr Clinton giving the thumbs-up, alongside a beaming Mr Arafat, who displays the V for victory sign.

It seemed nothing was going to stop Mr Arafat from using the visit as a springboard for his expected declaration of a Palestinian state next May.

Mr Arafat was apparently oblivious to the irony of Mr Clinton — under threat of impeachment over the Monica Lewinsky affair — being in Gaza. It was here that the Philistines brought the weakened and eyeless Samson, following his betrayal by the seductive Delilah, in a classic tale of one man's downfall because of his weakness for women.

But most Palestinian hotel operators would have forgiven Mr Clinton for his indiscretions, as they took full advantage of Gaza City being bathed in the international spotlight.

"These are crazy times," said one receptionist, attempting to justify the huge hike in room rates.



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The Qualiflyer Group

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Zimbabwe toll rises in Congo debacle

ZIMBABWEAN military authorities have made a rare acknowledgement of new losses in the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the former Zaire.

The state-controlled daily Herald newspaper reported that 80 Tutsi rebels were killed when Zimbabwean jets and heavy artillery pounded the town of Kabalo, a strategic Congo River port 935 miles southeast of Kinshasa, the capital. Troops of the Zimbabwean, Angolan and Namibian armies suffered casualties but "the number of troops killed was not immediately known", the Harare paper said.

Fighting Kabila's battles is proving costly, writes Jan Raath in Harare

The report also admitted that Zimbabwe had lost a helicopter gunship at Kabalo, an important railway junction in the mineral-rich Katanga province.

Congolese rebels confirmed that they had shot down a helicopter gunship but also a Zimbabwean MiG21 jet fighter as government forces tried to retake the town. Ernest Wamba dia Wamba, the Congo rebel leader, said his forces had

successfully repulsed the attack. Pro-government forces insisted that the battle for Kabalo was far from over. "Fighting still continues at Kabalo and the allied forces are continually gaining ground," the southern African forces based in Kinshasa said in a statement.

The admission of casualties, even though incomplete, is an unexpected exception to the comprehensive censorship of information on Zimbabwe's role in the war, which it entered in August to prevent the overthrow of President Kabila of Congo. Harare is thought to have deployed at least 6,000 troops in the conflict, but has admitted to only ten troop deaths. Western diplomatic sources estimate that the true toll is now well over 50. Angola and Namibia have made no statements since they joined the war in August.

Kabila, about 100 miles east of Congo's eastern border on Lake Tanganyika, is critical to rebel plans to take the large mining town of Mbuji-Mayi 220 miles further east, which would put Lubumbashi, the country's second largest city in the south, within their grasp.

President Mugabe of Zimbabwe is sensitive to criticism of the military operation in Congo, with good reason. A Gallup poll published at the weekend found that 70 per cent of Zimbabweans are opposed to the army's deployment in the former Zaire.

Zimbabwe is using both warplanes and helicopters — French Pumas and Russian aircraft — to attack rebels and ferry soldiers behind rebel lines. The rebels are a coalition of ethnic Tutsis, disaffected Congolese soldiers and opposition

politicians who took up arms on August 2, accusing President Kabila of misrule, corruption and ethnic warmongering.

They are supported by troops and arms from neighbouring Rwanda and Uganda, who accuse President Kabila of killing ethnic Congolese Tutsis and enlisting Ugandan and Rwandan rebels to attack them from bases in eastern Congo.

So far, efforts to broker a ceasefire have failed because of President Kabila's persistent refusal to negotiate directly with the rebels, whom he accuses of being the pup-

pets of the Rwanda and Uganda Governments.

Luanda: Unita rebel troops are driving a wedge through two central highland provinces of Angola, pushing the Government out of eight towns and advancing on the strategic city of Kuito, according to state radio reports yesterday.

Unita has taken four towns in Huambo province and four others in neighbouring Bie province since December 4, when fighting restarted in the area about 300 miles southeast of the capital, Luanda, ending a four-year pact between the Government and the rebels.

Leader of Hutu death squads admits genocide

By Sam Kiley, Africa Correspondent

A LEADER of Rwanda's Hutu death squads, which killed a million Tutsis and moderates from their own tribe, yesterday pleaded guilty to genocide and crimes against humanity at the United Nations war crimes tribunal.

Omar Serushago, 37, who led the Interahamwe (those who kill together) extremist militia, pleaded guilty to four counts, including charges that he personally killed four Tutsis, and not guilty to a charge of rape, which was dropped. He is only the second leading Hutu to enter a guilty plea at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, held in the northern Tanzanian town of Arusha.

Serushago played a leading role in organising Hutu militia in the western town of Gisenye, where thousands of Tutsis were slaughtered when the Hutu-dominated Government of Rwanda was forced to take over the local hotel after being driven from the capital, Kigali, by advancing Tutsi rebels.

He was extradited to stand trial at the UN's court last year from the Ivory Coast where he had been trying to claim refugee status. Former French colonies had been slow to arrest al-

leged mass murderers under pressure from the French authorities, who allowed many to escape during the French-led military intervention in the west of Rwanda from June 1994.

As a leader of Interahamwe, Serushago led groups of youths who manned road blocks where anyone suspected of being a Tutsi was slaughtered on the spot.

Serushago stood calmly before the UN's panel of judges as the indictment was read against him. It referred to one incident where soldiers had abducted 20 Tutsis from a private home in Gisenye. "They took them to a place known as 'Commune Rouge' and executed them. Omar Serushago personally killed four of the 20 persons," the indictment stated.

"I plead guilty, Mr President," said Serushago when he was asked to respond to the four charges. He will have to wait several weeks before he receives his sentence.

In his home town, his men continue their work. For the past four years, Tutsis have been unable to return to their homes at night in the Gisenye area. Interahamwe thugs continue to kill up to 20 people a week in the region.



John Hendricks, left, and Edmund Bourne singing their contender for a new national anthem for South Africa

Anthem in English trumpets the demise of apartheid

From Sam Kiley in Johannesburg

ONE OF the last vestiges of all-white rule may well be swept away by a traffic warden and a teacher.

The South African Cabinet is to choose a new national anthem which will abolish the Afrikaans anthem, *Die Stem van Suid Afrika*, as well as Nkosi Sikelel' i Afrika — the African National Congress song of liberation. Several versions of a new anthem will be discussed by the Cabinet, which will then put forward its choice for a final decision by President Mandela.

The betting is on a song sung entirely in English, a move that is likely to annoy Afrikaner nationalists who remember atrocities committed against their ancestors during the Second Boer War.

The new anthem, sung at

*Over our rainbow nation let sounds of joy resound
and let reconciliation in every heart rebound.
One land, one flag, one people, all differences cast aside,
with God's help and with courage we shall be unified.*

*God bless our land South Africa!
With thee as our help we shall not fear
Freedom and unity in our land South Africa!*

*Justice, peace and freedom are treasures of great worth.
Let us strive to keep these virtues in this country of our birth.
No culture, creed or colour shall ever us divide,
with God's help and with courage we shall be unified!*

South Africa by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who called the dawn of democracy the "birth of a rainbow nation", the new anthem appears to recognise that there is still some way to go. The first two lines read:

"Over our rainbow nation let sounds of joy resound! And let reconciliation in every heart rebound."

Mr Mbeki seemed struck by the sentiment and said that "there is something in the new anthem which I think points the way forward for ourselves as a country".

Mr Bourne told *The Star* newspaper that he and a fellow member of the Apostolic Church in Cape Town, Mr Hendricks, had written the anthem as an experiment.

"After rugby or something, it just went on from there," he said. Mr Hendricks, who translates German hymns, contributed to the lyrics.

the weekend by a massed choir of 10,000 people at a concert attended by Thabo Mbeki, the Deputy President, blends both the existing national anthem melodies. The African version, in Zulu, was composed in 1897 by Enoch Santonga and first published in 1934 and became the joint anthem for a democratic South Africa 50 years later.

Die Stem was written by Cornelius Langenhoven with a melody by Marthinus de Villiers and adopted as the national anthem in 1936. An English translation took another 16 years to be approved.

Mr Mbeki pronounced himself "elated" by the new contender, written by John Hendricks, a traffic warden of mixed race, and Edmund Bourne, a white teacher. Drawing on a phrase coined for

WORLD IN BRIEF

Korean PoWs are free after 45 years

Seoul: Two South Korean soldiers, believed to have been killed during the 1950-53 Korean War, returned home after escaping from a labour camp in the North where they were held captive for nearly half a century (Jennifer Veale writes).

South Korean officials said yesterday that the two prisoners-of-war, Kim Bok Ki, 67, and Park Dong Il, 71, were captured just before the war ended and worked in mines in the north of the communist nation until their escape earlier this year through an unidentified third country. A son and a daughter arrived with them. The two PoWs were listed as killed in action after being captured by Chinese troops on the North Korean side.

Hindus want film cut

Delhi: Hindu extremists in Bombay have offered to allow the screening of an internationally acclaimed Bollywood film. *Fire*, to go ahead if a lesbian scene is cut (Christopher Thomas writes). Shiv Sena, the ruling party in Maharashtra state, of which Bombay is the capital, has mobilised groups of thugs — *sauviks* — to ensure the movie is not shown. Some paraded in their underpants outside the home of the *Fire* star, Dilip Kumar, in protest at a "disgusting" film.

Ill Havel cancels talks

Prague: President Havel of the Czech Republic, who has been dogged by ill-health, was forced to cancel talks with José María Aznar, the visiting Spanish Prime Minister, after contracting a respiratory infection, his office said. Mr Havel, 62, the once chain-smoking playwright who led the non-violent 1989 overthrow of the Communists, had a small malignant tumour and part of his right lung removed in 1996. (Reuters)

Algerian leader quits

Algiers: Ahmed Ouyahia, the Algerian Prime Minister, resigned after opposition parties had accused him of failing to stop "widespread cheating" in favour of the ruling National Democratic Rally party in elections last year, and over his failure to end armed violence involving Islamist militants. Press reports said President Zeroual would name Smail Hamdani, former Ambassador to France, as successor. (Reuters)

Female travel 'victory'

Cairo: Egyptian women won a victory this month when the Interior Ministry decided to let them apply for passports without first obtaining the vice-squad's clearance, police said. Previously, those who were not university graduates were compelled under the law to obtain such permission. Regardless of their educational attainments, women must still obtain a male relative's permission in order to travel abroad. (AFP)

Dutch plan dogs ban

The Hague: The Netherlands will ban the breeding and sale of four types of dangerous dogs from July next year. The Agriculture Minister is expected this week to approve formally a ban on the American Staffordshire terrier, the fila brasileiro, the dogo argentino and the mastino napoletano. Current owners of the dogs will be able to keep them, but the Government hopes each breed will eventually die out. (Reuters)

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		Premier Loan	8.75%	N/A
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11.75%	12.40%	Premium Unsecured	11.25%	11.84%
10.75%	11.29%	Premium Secured	10.25%	10.74%
16.50%	17.80%	Special Unsecured	16.00%	17.22%
15.50%	16.64%	Special Secured	15.00%	16.07%
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Farewell, my concubine, I'm off to labour camp

MRS TANG is a middle-aged woman on the warpath. She has discovered that for the past six years her husband has been having an affair with a mainland Chinese woman, just across the border from Hong Kong, who was 18 when the liaison began. Her husband is secretly supporting this so-called second wife, and their four-year-old daughter.

Mrs Tang (not her real name) is not alone. As a result of the shift of industry from Hong Kong to southern China and Hong Kong's political handover, cross-border contact has grown steadily in recent years. And for some of the van drivers and businessmen going in and fro, the temptations to set up second wives have proved too great. One area just

Cheating husbands with cheap second spouses in China risk domestic revenge, writes Jill McGivering in Hong Kong

across the border is now known as Concubine Village because so many of the women there are Hong Kong mistresses.

Paulina Kwok, a social worker with the charity Caritas Hong Kong, runs a special service to offer support on extramarital affairs. She says that a third of her cases involve cross-border concubines. "Most of the men who work in China have second wives," she says. "Men like to have girlfriends and mistresses. It makes

them feel just like an emperor." The new wave of concubines is partly a symptom of the large wealth gap between Hong Kong and the mainland provinces just across the border. As China struggles to carry out economic restructuring, opportunities for women are few — and prices are so low that even a Hong Kong lorry driver can afford to fund a second home, for a mere £150 a month.

But Hong Kong women may now have some cause for hope. The problem has become so acute that China's powerful women's groups are taking up their cause — pressing the mainland authorities to crack down on Hong Kong men.

One tool is the bigamy law, which in mainland China can be used to punish men with mistresses, even if they have not gone through a formal second marriage ceremony.

Last month the authorities in the southern city of Guangzhou issued an official warning, saying men who keep mistresses could be sent for re-education through labour. That means up to three years in a labour camp, without even a trial.

Such harsh measures are causing alarm in Hong Kong. Human rights groups are wary of increased govern-

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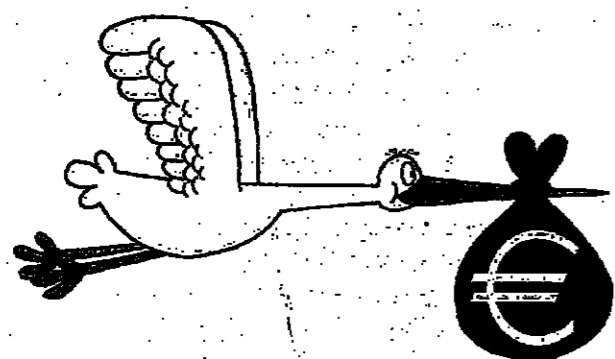
Nuclear talks reveal split in Bonn coalition

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

THE cracks in Germany's Red-Green coalition Government were exposed yesterday as Gerhard Schröder, the Chancellor, began delicate negotiations with electricity company bosses aimed at closing down the country's 19 nuclear power stations.

At his empty chair, Herr Trittin accepts the formula that government and nuclear energy companies should negotiate for a year to secure a reasonable settlement; if they fail, the Government is prepared to pass legislation ordering a nuclear shutdown.

also German industry. Herr Schröder seemed yesterday to share the reservations of the nuclear industry: "Our coalition agreement makes quite clear that the withdrawal from atomic energy should be carried out in conformity with the law and indeed with international law, to prevent huge demands for compensation."



A European Commission advertisement for the euro

Germany signals firm line on EU budget

Brussels: Germany yesterday laid down a hard line over its financial demands from the European Union, insisting that Britain must give ground on its rebate from the EU budget when a final deal is tackled under its presidency.

net contribution to the Union budget. This would require sacrifices for all states in the interests of paying for the entry of states from the East.

The controversy over how and where to store nuclear waste — with each federal region of Germany reluctant to take on the radioactive burden — has handicapped Germany for decades.

Pioneer spirits find a tonic in the ice

FROM ROBIN LODGE IN MOSCOW

WHILE the early onset of winter has brought appalling hardship to millions of people struggling below the poverty line in Russia and its neighbouring former Soviet republics, for some the freezing temperatures, ice and snow have come as a welcome tonic and a sure way of improving the quality of life.

Scenes like this, taken a few miles from Minsk, the capital of Belarus, can be found outside many cities, where devotees of ice swimming gather every week for an invigorating plunge. These self-styled "walrus" swear that there is no better way of ensuring good health and prolonging life than immersing oneself in a hole cut through the thick ice on a lake or river.



An ice swimmer in a Minsk suburb emerges from a bracing plunge yesterday

the Arctic Circle have abandoned their homes because of a lack of heating and food.

The authorities in the larger towns, where the situation is little better, have been struggling to find housing for such people, who would otherwise stand little chance of surviving in temperatures of -40C (-40F) and below. Last

week, a state of emergency was declared in the Pacific port of Vladivostok after fuel shortages brought power cuts. Matters have been made worse by the unseasonal cold of the past few weeks.

Albanian rebels 'killed in border clashes'

BY AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE IN PRISTINA

AT LEAST 30 Kosovo Albanian guerrillas were killed yesterday by Yugoslav border guards as they tried to cross into the province under cover of darkness, according to the Serbian Information Centre in Pristina.

It was by far the worst incident reported since mid-October when a fragile, US-brokered ceasefire between Kosovo Albanian separatists and Serbian security forces took effect.

The Kosovo ceasefire began in mid-October after President Milosevic of Yugoslavia agreed to suspend an offensive against Albanian rebels in Kosovo when threatened with Nato airstrikes.

More than 200,000 ethnic Albanians had been forced from their homes by the offensive before Mr. Milosevic agreed with Richard Holbrooke, the American special envoy, to call off the action.

Pavarotti exits over taxing role

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS IN ROME

LUCIANO PAVAROTTI has cancelled a New Year's Eve concert engagement with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra and a January 25 concert with the Deutsche Oper, also in Berlin, because of an investigation by German authorities into suspected unpaid tax by the Italian tenor.

heim, western Germany, for fraud, has named the singers as being involved. Signor Pavarotti, 63, was quoted by *Corriere della Sera* as confirming that on the advice of his lawyers he had withdrawn from the year-end concert in which he was to have sung with Mirella Freni, Christine Schäfer and Simon Keenlyside, under the direction of the conductor Claudio Abbado.

gation on suspected tax evasion charges for helping Herr Hoffman avoid tax payments that *Der Spiegel* put at £4.4 million. The Argentine tenor, José Cura, is to replace Signor Pavarotti at the Philharmonic, singing operatic pieces by Mozart, Verdi, Puccini and Berlioz, organisers said.

Toulouse policemen held over shooting

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

TWO French policemen have been arrested in Toulouse after an Algerian teenager was shot and killed, provoking riots in immigrant areas across the southern city.

Habib Muhammad, 17, was shot during what police described as an attempted car theft on Saturday. He was left unattended for hours and died in the street near where the incident took place.

News of the shooting spread through the volatile Toulouse suburbs, prompting a day-long riot by youths armed with rocks and petrol bombs in which six policemen were injured and two dozen cars set on fire.

The state prosecutor in Toulouse ordered an investigation into the shooting. The officer leading the four-man police patrol was suspended.

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Dorah: a year of hope and bravery

Life is dramatically different for the child saved by Times readers last Christmas, Bronwen Jones reports

A YEAR ago *The Times* highlighted the plight of Dorah Mokoena, a four-year-old child with no face. She was all but blinded and left with appalling injuries by a fire at the family home in a South African township. There was an incredible response to her plight — readers donated more than £100,000 to bring the child to Britain for treatment and surgeons offered their help for nothing. This week Dorah will undergo her sixteenth operation in this country. Much more of her sight has already been restored and the future is looking bright for the child who doctors once feared would never survive.

She has learnt to walk and articulate emotions and desires

In an attempt to ease Dorah's constant pain, surgeons in South Africa had been ready to remove her eyes — severely burnt in the blaze. Changing the dressings several times a day was agony for the child. It would have been yet another tragic twist to her sad story — a fire that almost killed her, separation from a mother deemed an unfit parent by the South African authorities and an early childhood scarred by a drunken and violent father. The *Times* appeal was to mark a dramatic turn in her fortunes, with money. They reached out to her as if she were their own. Many specialists' names were suggested, but one ophthalmic surgeon was put forward again and again — Richard Collin, of Moorfields Eye Hospital in East London. Mr Collin, an acknowledged world leader in his field, agreed to try to operate on Dorah. First he needed to establish if surgery was a viable option — could Dorah be beyond hope? Sky TV flew out to South Africa

and shot medical videos to show the staff at Moorfields the extent of the injuries. At the same time they introduced people in more than 40 countries to the infectious giggle of a seriously disfigured but still, extraordinarily, very happy little girl. To place Dorah's story in context, we went with a television crew to the vast Boteng squatter camp near Delmas, where she was born, and where she lost her face and hands in a fire in 1994. Against all expectation, we found Dorah's mother Margaret, who had been separated from her child for more than two years.

In January this year, once we had verified Margaret's details, mother and child were reunited. At that stage, Dorah did not know her mother but I have never seen an expression to match the smile on Margaret's face that day. In February, Sizanani, the Catholic mission where Dorah and her mother were then living, helped us to overturn a court order and return Dorah to her mother's legal custody. In late March we flew to London — everybody was nervous. South African Airways wanted to know how Dorah would cope with the flight. We wanted to know how the public would cope with seeing Dorah. However, mother and child seemed entirely unfazed.

Margaret was then a young, ill-educated woman who had barely travelled beyond her community. She was used to living in corrugated iron shacks with dirt floors, no running water and no electricity. She moved from the squatter camp to the carpeted, comfortable home of benefactors in a four-storey house in Fulham, southwest London. This pattern of generous-spirited Britons welcoming mother and child into their homes became the norm.



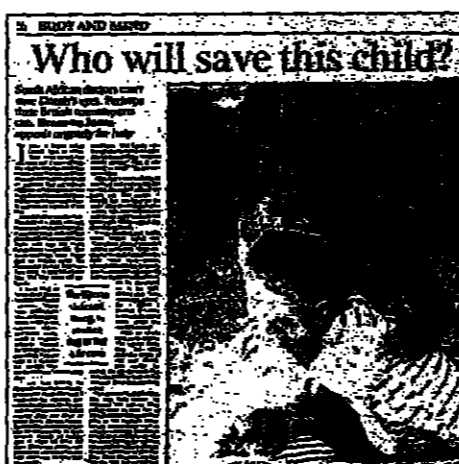
Dorah Mokoena and her mother Margaret at Moorfields Eye Hospital where she will undergo her sixteenth operation on injuries she suffered when her home caught fire

The first operation followed soon afterwards and by the time that Dorah turned four on Easter Day her very limited sight had been saved.

Mr Collin extracted remnant eyelids from within the skull and stitched them over the child's eyes. He covered the bare lids with supple skin from each side of Dorah's neck and then placed peepholes in the lids to allow her to continue to receive visual stimulation.

In a city full of such medical skill, there was no shortage of expert advice. Gradually, a team began to emerge — surgeons, junior doctors, nurses and advisers. It became clear that to give Dorah a quality of life worth living she needed a series of operations to rebuild her face. If cosmetic surgery was not carried out, she would grow increasingly disfigured. The poor-quality skin grafts performed in the past had no elasticity and most of the area between where Dorah's eyebrows are and her chin was not growing in proportion to the rest of her head.

But how do you make new lips for a little girl who has none? She hasn't got lots of spare skin to take



The appeal to readers of *The Times*

from elsewhere on her body. So, John Clarke, the burns consultant surgeon then at the Queen Mary's University Hospital in Roehampton, started the protracted process of growing a pedicle on Dorah's back. Cutting into one of the few areas on the little girl's body that was, until then, untouched, he formed folds of skin that looked like suitcase handles. Gradually these were lengthened into one long tube of skin and when that was growing healthily, it was

detached at the lower end of her back, swung over her right shoulder and stitched on to her right cheek.

We watched the peculiar progress of "sausage" into "chin strap" and eventually into Dorah's lower lip. The off-the-shoulder stage was difficult: the ring-doughnut-like device on the side of Dorah's face was probably worst of all. That was to be the final stage before Mr Clarke and his team fashioned Dorah's upper lip.

During the lip-preparation period that was completed at the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, work also began on Dorah's right arm. The stump was undone by the consultant David Martin, and with skin from her leg, a paddle-like hand was formed.

Tomorrow, if Dorah's cold has cleared up, she faces her sixteenth operation since her arrival in Britain. Preliminary work will start to place plastic "formers" between the upper and lower lids on her best eye, to increase the space between her eyelids and the eye itself.

A six-month operation-free period should follow before work begins to remove a cataract formed by the heat of the fire and then to

give Dorah a corneal graft. As these painful and emotionally draining operations have continued, Dorah has been getting to know her mother again. And Margaret, in addition to learning mothering skills, has grown accustomed to life in Britain.

The life changes experienced by these two young South Africans have been enormous. Dorah used to spend much of her life lying on her back, clad in a nappy and able to do almost nothing for herself. In less than a year she has learnt to walk; to articulate desires and emotions; to feed herself with a spoon and she is now continent.

Therapists attribute the enormous leaps in development that Dorah has made to the security of loving family homes, to her mother being with her and to hearing only one language rather than the mix of 11 found in South African hospitals. Her mother is now learning to drive, enjoys kung fu training once a week, and attends private tutorials and school classes in English, current affairs and science.

None of this would have happened but for the extraordinary generosity of readers of *The Times* and others willing to ease the suffering of a tiny child. There is a seasonal

message here which should not be forgotten — there are so many Dorahs, so many who need our help.

Meanwhile, two significant charities have been established — the Dorah Mokoena Charitable Trust in Britain and Children of Fire in South Africa. Together they will work towards helping Dorah and other children injured by fire to achieve optimum medical treatment.

In this country schools and charities have already shown their willingness to help. Most recently, Nottingham teenagers began planning how they can visit South Africa and help other children who have suffered similar injuries.

Let the last words come from George Carey, the Archbishop of Canterbury. He told 800 bishops from across the world how meeting Dorah had reminded him of the importance of each person's inner face rather than their outer visage.

Donations to the Dorah Mokoena Charitable Trust can be made to account number 30299065 sort code 20-17-92. Or posted to Victor de Gray at Barclays Premier, 16 Rose Lane, Canterbury, Kent CT1 2UR. The charities can be e-mailed at firechildren@icon.co.za or at dorah-trust@iname.com

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Prepare for the season of gluttony

The 16th-century proverb that gluttony kills more than the sword is still certainly true in the developed world. The consequences of gluttony — heart disease, high blood pressure, strokes and diabetes — however, unlike the sword, will probably deliver their final fatal blow only after we have lived around three score years, if not our allotted three score years and ten.

MEDICINE CHEST

DR THOMAS STUTTAFORD

not finish even a small meal, and may have trouble concealing their belching. These symptoms are the hallmarks of dysmotility dyspepsia. Indigestion sufferers are aware of the problems produced by acidity and heartburn and are familiar with the relief from its symptoms which can be obtained from their favourite remedies, whether antacids, alginates like Gaviscon, H2-antagonists such as Zantac or proton pump inhibitors like Losec.

Long before then, with or without gluttony, a poor digestion will have caused countless thousands of people to fall victim to a group of post-prandial symptoms described as dysmotility dyspepsia or indigestion. These people are only the walking wounded, for fortunately nobody is going to die from this type of indigestion, but for an hour or two they will not be at their best.

The luckless people with dysmotility dyspepsia, clutching abdomens as distended as those of a Toby jug, will have noticed after a meal that they have a sense of uncomfortable fullness, a heaviness and bloating. They may feel slightly sick, sated so that they can-

not finish even a small meal, and may have trouble concealing their belching. These symptoms are the hallmarks of dysmotility dyspepsia. Indigestion sufferers are aware of the problems produced by acidity and heartburn and are familiar with the relief from its symptoms which can be obtained from their favourite remedies, whether antacids, alginates like Gaviscon, H2-antagonists such as Zantac or proton pump inhibitors like Losec.

However, few indigestion sufferers, particularly those whose main problem is not acidity but the sense of fullness, have heard of dysmotility, know what it means, or are aware that, since the autumn, they don't even have to trouble their doctor, but can buy Motilium, a remedy for it, over the counter at the phar-

macist. Now is the time to find out all about gastric motility, so that they have the opportunity of enjoying their turkey and plum pudding and still have the chance of listening to the Queen's Speech in comfort.

In dysmotility, the stomach's motility, or movement, is reduced so that after a heavy, rich or fatty meal, particularly one taken with much alcohol, the food lingers in the stomach for longer than usual. The peristaltic waves which churn the food in the stomach, like a washing machine, before finally moving it along from the stomach and out into the gut, are feeble and disorganised.

In severe cases, the stomach's peristaltic waves may even go into reverse so that the stomach's contents are regurgitated and the patient suffers oesophageal reflux — heartburn or acid brash.

The likelihood of reflux is increased as patients with dysmotility have a lax lower oesophageal sphincter, the opening between the gullet and the stomach. Dysmotility

indigestion, as well as gastric acidity, is therefore partly responsible for causing reflux heartburn.

Medication designed to treat dysmotility indigestion increases lower oesophageal sphincter pressure — thereby preventing reflux, quickens gastric peristalsis so that the food is mixed quicker, the stomach emptied faster, and the peristaltic muscular waves increased in strength, driving the food more rapidly onwards — and downwards through the gut. The drugs prescribed for motility problems have an anti-emetic effect.

What should be in the medicine chest? Maxolon (metoclopramide) was the standby for many years but it can have

rather unfortunate side-effects: very occasionally, particularly in older patients, it can produce tardive dyskinesia, involuntary grimacing, face pulling, or twitching. In all age groups it may give rise to diarrhoea and drowsiness. Prepidol (cisapride) is useful in preventing reflux and improving gastric motility, and also increases colonic motility, and so has an anti-constipation role. It doesn't cause tardive dyskinesia.

Finally there is Motilium 10 (domperidone) which is the first anti-motility agent to be available over the counter. It is reassuringly free of side-effects and, because it does not cross the blood brain barrier, neither gives rise to tardive dyskinesia nor to drowsiness.



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The world's a stage — but it's all a bit silly, really

Over the weekend, Sir Anthony Hopkins gave an interview saying that, after a bout of depression, he now finds acting "disturbing and distasteful". Describing it as a "futile, wasteful life", he added: "All those years in a false environment. Everything was fake." Do others feel the same way? Tom Conti believes that although the Hopkins view may be extreme, such doubts afflict all actors at some point.

There are moments in the life of any actor when a sense of the futility of it all does impinge. There is a story told about Olivier making a particularly extravagant exit, landing in the wings, and saying: "My God, this is no job for a grown man." In my family, such occasions are known as "stout moments". It all goes back to a time in my career before I could be sure of regular work. Many years ago, I was appearing in Edinburgh in a desperately poor production of *The Wind in the Willows*. I was playing the Chief Stoot. We were standing in the wings, five grown men clothed head to toe in white nylon fur, whiskers painted on our faces, the end of our noses blacked. As

He is one of Hollywood's biggest stars, but Sir Anthony Hopkins is disillusioned with acting. Do others feel the same way? Tom Conti talks to Grace Bradberry

the time for our cue drew near, we all, as one, raised our hands into a paw position. I looked down the line, saw the five of us, and said: "I can't go on." And I didn't. I stood in the wings and watched my fellow actors. I just couldn't do it. I have to say that the "stout" never ceases to present itself.

The stout syndrome can be particularly extreme in Hollywood, where there tends to be a bogus aspect to the whole business. It's such a high-profile, high-profit business that it attracts a lot of people who really ought not to be in it. When you're shooting you enter a make-believe world and, inside the production office, there is a second, rather different make-believe world. So there is a feeling of unreality both on and off the set. Maybe that does eventually get to you. For example, there is something that people in Los Angeles say — a kind of

equivalent of "Hello, how are you?" — which is really very silly. They say, "Hi Tom, it's so exciting that you're here." I know perfectly well that it's not remotely exciting for them that I'm there. I'm afraid I've been around too long to take it at face value.

The other thing about Hollywood that drives everybody mad is that no one will take a decision on the basis of the talent involved. Instead, people look up a "demograph" table telling them how much box-office revenue a particular actor will pull in a certain kind of picture in various parts of the world. I've seen this from the other side when I've been sitting in production offices trying to cast something. I'll say: "How about so and so, he was great in such and such a film." And someone will say: "No, it's two years ago, he's dead in the water, the figures are way down." The truth is that a good actor has

more chance of making a movie successful than a bad one, but that is not considered. Things like that do drive me crazy.

So it's terribly important to be doing something else, other than hanging around waiting for things to happen. I know that, like me, Tony is a great music lover and that he composes. I hope he may find solace and enjoyment in that. The truth is that, in a sense, there is something very silly about acting, in that you pretend to be someone else. But you have to keep those thoughts at bay because, after all, this is one's livelihood, and there is an awful lot to be said on the positive side. I find, for one thing, that the stage is the only place where I function well and efficiently. If only I could do the same when I'm sitting at my desk, sorting out the peripheral aspects of the business, life would be a lot simpler. To be less introspective, we probably



Anthony Hopkins feels like a fake

do ourselves an injustice by feeling that what we do is wholly unimportant. People have a thirst to be entertained, so by quenching that we are a necessary function for society. I'm now doing a play, *Jesus, My Boy*, and when I look out I see hundreds of people having a good time. Of course, there can be bad moments. I

think every actor could identify to some extent with Stephen Fry when he left *Cellar Door* 10th years ago. I did an Arthur Miller play and, as I woke each morning, my stomach turned over at the thought of doing the play. Stephen's fear may have been extreme, but we've all experienced something like it.

The sense of futility is another thing altogether. There is a perception of acting as frivolous and, if you accept that, you endanger yourself — and the quality of your work. Only a few people really know what the quality of your work is: in the same way that only great violinists recognise other great violinists, the same holds with actors. When we first become noticed it is a very exciting, glamorous time. After that you do become part of the furniture. But for those of us who are lucky enough to be successful in the business, being an actor — particularly in movies — is a privilege and it gains you access to people and places that are denied to almost everyone else.

Tom Conti is now appearing in *Jesus, My Boy* at the Apollo Theatre. Tel: 0171-4754767.

Divided by the spirit of Christmas?

Christmas can be delicate if your partner is not a Christian, says Miranda Ingram

My daughter Vita is Mary. Four years old, she has a swathe of blue permanently wrapped round her head and recently took to muttering about "cheeses" in her tummy. Only when she and her baby brother started preparing a manger did we realise it wasn't tummy ache but an imminent virgin birth. Time, I realised, whipping out a copy of the *Christmas Story for Children*, to inject some Christianity into the festivities. We had got to the Angel Gabriel telling Mary that she was going to have a baby and call Him Jesus when I noticed uncomfortable glances from Alexander, my Soviet-reared, atheist, Russian husband.

If the nearest you come to defining your religion is ticking the C of E box on application forms, what to do about Christmas is not the prime concern when entering a lifelong relationship with a non-Christian. But even twice-a-year churchgoers can come over quite spiritual once there are children involved. Teaching that "it isn't just about presents" is, after all, integral to a decent moral upbringing. Yet several years into a marriage, the sudden production of stockings, angel chimies and a crib that plays *In A Manger* by one partner, can raise unexpected dilemmas.

David Simons, a doctor and a Jew, was horrified when his wife Sarah, also a doctor, start-

ed planning a family Christmas after the first of their three children was born. "Until then, we had been travelling or visiting people so the question of how we might celebrate at home had not arisen. Since neither of us is particularly religious we hadn't discussed it.

"My parents are not Orthodox, but we still didn't do anything at home. I used to get money at

Hanukkah, and I remember buying myself a present in the Christmas holidays so I wouldn't feel embarrassed when I went back to school and people asked me what I got for Christmas.

"So when Sarah bought a tree I was happy, but when she started doing stockings I was appalled. I hadn't realised what a fuss the Santa Claus business is. I assumed it had some religious significance but, above all, I believe in being honest with children and thought it absurd that Sarah was going to encourage them to believe in something as silly as Father Christmas.

"Although my parents try to give our three children some Jewish input, I don't feel any inclination to do so myself. I'd rather concentrate on moral truths based on the higher

human values of both Judaism and Christianity. However, a full-blown Christmas is now the main present-giving family event. It has been a war of attrition: the children have such a huge investment in it that I'd have to be a complete bastard to put my foot down. But I feel it's Sarah's event."

Sarah says: "Although David is Jewish, and I'm not particularly religious, it never occurred to me that we wouldn't do

stockings for our children. When I realised how much he hated it I remember feeling panicky. Christmas stockings were the highlight of my childhood. I could not bear the thought of not doing that for my children.

"As they grew older I felt it was important to introduce the story of Jesus even though I knew David wouldn't like it. Now I take them to Christmas carols, too. But I'd be perfectly happy for them to do the Jewish festivals as well. In a way, I wish David would do more about this — if there was more of a balance I would feel happier about Christmas.

"But, in the end, David likes a good festival as much as the next man. I suspect he enjoys it more than he lets on." As with most aspects of

When I discovered that he hated it, I felt really panicky



Dreaming of a bicultural Christmas: John Passmore and his Hindu wife Trupti with their baby Rohan. The couple always have a Christmas tree

child rearing, she who runs the home tends to have the major input in the Christmas debate.

For one-year-old Rohan Passmore, Christmas will be a bonus coming on top of all the Hindu festivals. John Passmore, a care worker, is married to Trupti, a teacher and a Hindu. He says: "Trupti's family always had a tree at Christmas so there was never any question that we would celebrate the holiday. But it will be a festival without religious content.

"It is not something we have discussed, but now we have a child, I realise that as he grows up I will try and introduce at least an ethical element into Christmas so that he understands that it is about being kind and giving and sharing. But I expect he will feel more Hindu than Christian, partly because Trupti is fairly religious and I am not, and because her family is in England whereas mine is in South Africa so the Hindu festivals will be the big family events for him.

"I'm not bothered about what he chooses to believe or not believe in. I will be more interested in watching how he feels culturally as he grows older. I shall be responsible for a strong cultural input and it will be fascinating to watch how he absorbs the two."

Although younger than the generation that was trained to be anti-religious, Alexander still learnt to look upon religion as a sort of disability. He says: "Every culture needs its rituals for a sense of identity — a fact Stalin recognised when he reintroduced the decorated fir tree, in our case the New Year's Eve tree, just before the Second World War. In this sense I feel easy with Christmas as a cultural ritual: a time for family to gather, to be physically close, to reminisce and look forward — exactly what New Year's Eve is in Russia.

"When you have children these rituals become more important in the sense of 'passing the torch' — passing your culture, traditions and memories on to your children."

But the experience of communism leaves him uneasy around religion. "Having lived under this system I am painfully aware of how any doctrine can be abused. Fanaticism of any hue — and you can see it in the staring eyes of the devoted in churches and temples — makes me shudder."

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COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE December 14: The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh were represented by Air Chief Marshal Sir Richard Johns at the Service of Thanksgiving for the Life of Air Chief Marshal Sir Frederick Rosier which was held in St Clement Danes Church, Strand, London, today.



All set for Snowball '98, the charity ball to be held tonight at 1 Whitehall Place. Oliver Hearnsey, Julian Hill-Landott, Alice Montagu Douglas Scott, Simon Murray, and, seated, Anthony Gibson-Watts and Lady Sarah Villiers, the Earl of Clarendon's daughter, meeting yesterday at the Cadogan Hotel, Sloane Street, to prepare for the big event

Royal engagements

The Queen will meet a group of embroiderers, and will view their ornaments on the Christmas tree in the Picture Gallery at Buckingham Palace at 12.40. The ornaments will then be on view at the Victoria and Albert Museum, before being auctioned by Phillips in aid of a children's charity.

Nicholas Budgen

A service of thanksgiving for the life and work of Nicholas Budgen will take place in St Margaret's Church, Westminster, today, at noon on Wednesday, February 3, 1999.

Memorial service

Marshall of the RAF Sir Michael and Lady Bestham. Admiral Sir Brian Brown (Victory Services Association), Admiral Sir Derek Buxton (RAF Association), and Coach Harness Makers' Company.

Mr Michael Samuelson

A celebration of the life of Mr Michael Samuelson, CBE, formerly of Michael Samuelson Lighting Ltd, Special Trustee to Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children, one time Chief Editor of the National Museum of Wales.

Dinners

The Sheriffs and their ladies were the guests at the annual dinner of the Guild of Freeman of the City of London held last night at Guildhall.

Today's birthdays

Mr David Abell, former chairman and chief executive, Surrey, 56; Mrs Valerie Aggett, former Principal, Holborn Law College, 48; Mr Garath Archer, union player, 24; Mr Michael Bogdanoff, theatre director, 60; Mr Clive Brittain, racehorse trainer, 65; the Earl of Buckinghamshire, 54; Dr S.A. Checkley, psychiatrist, 53; Lord Cromham, 28; Sir Graham Dorey, Bailiff of Guernsey, 66; Air Marshal Sir John Fitzpatrick, 69; Miss Ida Haendel, violinist, 74; Sir Henry Hardman, former civil servant, 93; Mr Carl Hooper,

Mr Michael Samuelson

A celebration of the life of Mr Michael Samuelson, CBE, formerly of Michael Samuelson Lighting Ltd, Special Trustee to Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children, one time Chief Editor of the National Museum of Wales.

Dinners

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Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Nero, 5th Roman Emperor AD54-68. Antium (Anzio), AD 37: George Romney, portrait painter, Dalton-in-Furness, Lancashire, 1734; Alexandre Gustave Eiffel, builder of the tower bearing his name, Dijon, 1832; Niels Finsen, physician, Nobel laureate 1903, Torshavn, Faeroe Islands, 1860; Josef Hoffmann, architect, Pirmitz, Czechoslovakia, 1870.

Anniversaries

er, Deif, 1675; Isaac Walton, the Father of Angling, Winchester, 1633; George Hicks, theologian, 1715; Benjamin Stillingfleet, naturalist, London, 1771; Charles Stanhope, 3rd Earl Stanhope, politician and man of science, Chevening, 1816; Sitting Bull, chief of the Sioux, on Grand River, South Dakota, 1890; Gregory Rasputin, monk, favourite at the Russian court, murdered, St Petersburg, 1916;

Forthcoming marriages

Mr J.S. Biddolph and the Hon S.M. Gretton. The engagement is announced between John, elder son of Mr and Mrs Simon Biddolph, of Rodmaston, Gloucestershire, and Sarah, only daughter of the late Lord Gretton and of Lady Gretton, of Somerby, Leicestershire.

Institute of Physics

The following have been awarded Institute of Physics Awards, 1999: Glazebrook Medal and Prize: Christopher Hubert Llewellyn Smith, FRS; Director General of CERN.

Latest wills

James Arthur Giles of Hindon, Salisbury, Wiltshire, left estate valued at £4,557,413 net. Kathie Bradley, of London NW11, left estate valued at £1,239,350 net.

PERSONAL COLUMN

BIRTHS: BREAKELL - On December 10th to Suzie (nee Morris) and James, a daughter, Daisy Eleanor Lucy.

DEATHS: BLACK - On the 9th December 1998 at Princess Margaret Hospital, Swindon, Herma Charles, 82, of Tottenham, Marlborough. Most truly beloved husband of Phyllis.

DEATHS: GLENNE - David Gordon on December 12th, 1998, peacefully at home. Dearly loved husband of Gillian.

DEATHS: HALLWELL - Oswald George 'Dennis', aged 90, peacefully at Cowley House, Reading, on December 12th, 1998.

NEWS

Antibiotic warning on animals

Farmers must stop using four common antibiotics in poultry and pig feed because of fears about the effects on people who eat the meat. EU ministers decided yesterday. The drugs are used to promote growth in animals, but there are concerns that such use could increase human resistance to the medicines and render them ineffective. Britain was among a strong majority of EU states in agreeing the ban, with only Belgium, Portugal and Spain abstaining. Page 1

Compulsory pensions scheme

Firms are to be given the right to require their workers to join the company pension scheme under government proposals to encourage people to save more for their old age. The move, affecting around one million people, will be signalled in the green paper on stakeholder pensions to be unveiled today. Page 1

Spencer flees blaze

Earl Spencer and his four children escaped unhurt when lightning sent fire sweeping through the family mansion in South Africa. The bolt scored a direct hit on the thatched roof of the five-bedroom property, sending flames high into the sky. Page 1

Support for Palestine

President Clinton defied death threats by Islamic militants and made a historic first visit to territory controlled by Yasser Arafat during which he gave de facto support to an eventual Palestinian state. Pages 1, 11

Turning back time

Scientists have developed a way of reversing the debilitating effects of old age. The success raises the possibility of restoring muscle power to the old, and perhaps of prolonging their lives. Page 1

'Lunatics' run Tories

Tony Blair and William Hague widened the political divide over Europe as the Prime Minister used the aftermath of the Vienna summit to claim that Tory policy was being dictated by "lunatics" and "headbangers". Page 2

Survivor's ordeal

The sole survivor of a boating tragedy that robbed the tiny island of Iona of a generation of its young men saw the body of his dead friend on the shoreline as he scrambled to safety. Page 3

Auld Lang Syne a Geordie tune

The Scottish writer Robert Burns has long been celebrated for penning the words to Auld Lang Syne, but it now seems that the man who wrote the tune was a Geordie. While Burns is believed to have first heard the tune while travelling in Scotland in 1788, it appears that the music was written five years earlier by the Gateshead-born composer William Shield. Page 9

Journalist cleared

A BBC journalist was cleared of assaulting his girlfriend yesterday after a court heard that she had brought the charges out of revenge when he had ended the relationship. Page 5

Young race to grave

Today's youth eat, drink and smoke so much that they can expect only a short and unhealthy life. According to the largest survey of young people, 23 per cent of males and 19 per cent of young women are overweight. Page 6

Clinton speaks out

In an attempt to head off the constitutional crisis engulfing his office, President Clinton said yesterday that his impeachment would be against the interest of the United States. Page 10

Congo casualties

Zimbabwean military authorities have made a rare acknowledgement of new losses in the war in the Democratic Republic of Congo, formerly Zaire. The state-controlled daily Herald newspaper reported that 80 Tuists rebels were killed. Page 12

Nuclear shutdown

The cracks in Germany's Red-Green coalition Government were exposed as Gerhard Schröder, the Chancellor, began negotiations with electricity bosses aimed at closing down 19 nuclear power stations. Page 13



The Phoenix unmanned spy plane, which has to land on its back on an air bag to avoid being damaged, entered operational service with the Army yesterday, nine years late. It will provide intelligence on enemy positions by photographing the battlefield from about 8,000ft

Chemicals sale: Oil giant Royal Dutch/Shell Group said it will slash costs and sell major parts of its business, including 40 per cent of chemicals. Page 23

EMAP purchase: EMAP, the media group, is on the verge of its biggest acquisition - the £655 million purchase of Peterson, the US magazine publisher. Page 23

Price fall: The price of manufactured goods leaving factory gates showed its biggest monthly fall in November since records began in 1958. Page 23

Markets: The FTSE 100 index fell 7.20 points to 5534.5. The pound rose 0.47 cents to \$1.6869, matched by a 0.47 pfennig rise to DM2.7866. The sterling index rose to 100.5 from 100.4. Page 26

Football: Arsenal's Patrick Vieira has been fined £20,000 for a gesture he made to a supporter after the incident in which Paolo Di Canio, the Sheffield Wednesday player, felled a referee. Page 44

Golf: Lee Westwood, the European Tour golfer of the year, wants to "re-write history" and looks forward to landing a host of Major titles in the future. Page 42

Cricket: England's hopes of salvaging the third Test match against Mark Taylor's team in Adelaide quickly dissipated as Australia put them to the sword again. Page 40

Olympic Games: Chinese officials yesterday claimed that the voting for the right to stage the 2000 Games, eventually won by Sydney, was rigged. Page 44

Plantasia: Not content with her existing jobs as virtuoso pianist, Arts Council member Joanna MacGregor now has her own record label too. Page 31

Building a Library: 'Tis the season to be singing along to Handel's Messiah, but if the mass of CDs daunts you, see those our reviewer has singled out. Page 31

Come and get it: Welsh National Opera's staging of Humperdinck's Hansel and Gretel goes easy on the Freudian symbolism. Page 32

Self-destruct: Every work produced by the artist Gustav Metzger is marked by the memory of his parents perishing in the Holocaust. Now Oxford's Museum of Modern Art is showcasing Metzger's haunting career. Page 33

Hope in eight: Much more of Dorah Mokoena's sight has been restored and the future is looking bright for the child that doctors once feared would never survive her injuries. Page 14

Dr Thomas Stutson: The price you pay for gumption. Page 14

Seasoned advice: Christmas can be delicate if your partner is Jewish or an atheist. But there are ways around the dilemma. Page 15

Countering crooks: Preventing lawyers who have been struck off from continuing to practise because of dishonesty can be tricky. Page 35

Ring in the new: Frances Gibb interviews Lord Irvine of Lairg, the Lord Chancellor. Page 37

TOMORROW

In The Times

INTERFACE: The men behind Lara Croft score again. Six-page Christmas software special

HOMES: What are the true costs of buying and selling? Rachel Kelly reports on new government figures

Preview: Scheme to rehabilitate herb-crawlers. Modern Times (BBC2, 9.30pm) Review: Joe Joseph on South Africa. Pages 42, 43

Clause and effect: For all the difficulties and undoubted frustrations involved, it is right for President Clinton to make the Middle East peace process the object of his time. Page 17

Substance abuse: To many people it simply feels wrong to be feeding animals on antibiotics, and the sentiment deserves respect. Page 17

Into the night: Of crucial importance is the research that could predict the onset of Alzheimer's. For those suffering now, the best Christmas present would be to know that fewer will succumb in the future. Page 17

PETER RIDDELL: William Hague is rapidly leading his troops away from the European Union. Many will cheer his sceptic drumbeat, but they may find themselves an isolated band. Page 8

LIBBY PURVES: You wake up on Sunday morning and there it is on the radio: a report that a government agency, Action 2000, is advising householders to hoard a fortnight's rations for next New Year because of millennium bug disruption. Yes it has begun! Let the wild times roll. Page 16

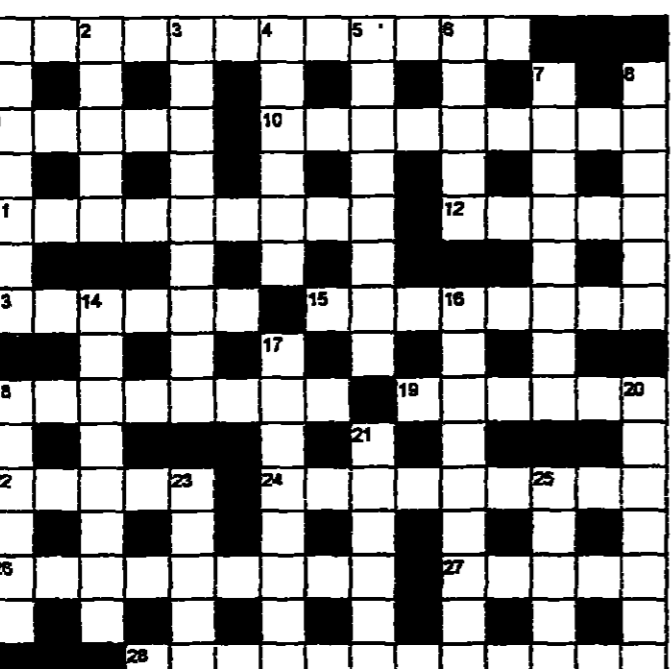
ANDREW TYRIE: The Lords will have difficulty playing more than a navigatory role in the country's constitutional future, while it lacks any democratic legitimacy. Page 16

MICHAEL GOVE: There's a curious pang in Downing Street. It's the smell of fear. It came reeking off this page in yesterday's Times. Page 16

The Most Rev Henry McAdoo, Archbishop of Dublin 1977-85; Air Commodore Ian Stockwell, retired New Zealand Air Force; Alec Moyse, founder Morrison Construction Group. Page 19

Care for the community; house buyers' EU prices; local government finance; funerals. Page 17

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,975



- ACROSS: 1 Large bird with one penetrating cry that's pursuing lark (12). 9 Arrest indefinite number in crash (3,2). 10 Relish getting to study obscure medical speciality (9). 11 Restoration the aim of this Army Command? (2,3,4). 12 Leaflet got by drivers entering race (5). 13 Catholic's protection for priest's objects of veneration (6). 15 Girl has a curious look, we hear, showing scorn for poet (9). 18 Doubled return in collieries bringing praise (6). 19 Ass and old horse put together with hesitation (6). 22 Fellow is at home earlier, as work's ending (5).
- DOWN: 1 Pirate's crude ditty heard (7). 2 Writer on American city getting minimal payment (5). 3 Lightweight restricted by split gave up (9). 4 Heading off demonstrator - one likely to start a quarrel (6). 5 Basic gear, coming to fish on lake (5). 6 I do it wrong - that's natural (5). 7 Telling story the wrong way round in group (5). 8 Run away from standing office (6). 14 Learner meriting scholarship (9). 16 With awful cringe, pay tribute (9). 17 Bound to be hard up (9). 18 Flier's laboured breathing when gravity-free (6). 20 Worker expected to make good on the way (7). 21 So much beer can be a lot of fun (6). 23 Guide animal (5). 25 Spring onto horse, one provided for cavalryman (5).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,974: OVERSLEEP DIPIT, SCRAM PUNCHER, OGA SILLU, LOUVER, OSOSIS, E T I T, BERMINOLOGICAL, E E G N N A, MASSPRODUCTION, C D E A O T, BAYONET MARRATE, J M A R S B D N, ERADICATE ELLEN, C O A C U O I A, TREND TURNTABLE

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General: N and W Scotland will be rather windy with sun and showers. E Scotland will also be breezy but with some damp sunny spells. In Ireland will see the odd shower. SE England will remain cloudy but very mild with outbreaks of rain. Rain elsewhere in England and Wales, clearing later. London, SE England, E Anglia, Cam & Bedford, Channel Isles, mild but cloudy with spells of rain. Moderate SE wind. Max 12-15C (54-59F). E Midlands, E England, W Midlands, SW England, Wales, starting dull and wet but brighter later. Moderate SW wind. Max 12-15C (54-59F). N West England, Lake District, Isle of Man, Central N some sun, a few showers.

Table with columns: Sun, Rain, Max, Min, Wind, Sea, Fog. Lists weather conditions for various UK locations like Aberdeen, Anglesey, Jersey, etc.

Highest day temp: Norwich, Moray and Colchester, Norfolk, 16C (61F); lowest day max: Eskdalemuir and Dunrobin, Dumfries & Galloway, 11C (52F); highest rainfall: Lusa, Sloye, 1.69m; highest sunshine: Lowestoft, Suffolk, 2.8h.

Table with columns: City, Sun, Rain, Max, Min, Wind, Sea, Fog. Lists weather conditions for various international cities like Ajaccio, Anzoli, Ankara, etc.



Changes to the chart below from noon: low E will move northeast and slowly fill; low F will transfer northeast and deepen; Highs S and T will drift northeast and amalgamate



Table with columns: TODAY, AM, HT, PM, HT. Lists weather forecasts for various cities like Aberdeen, Amsterdam, Antwerp, etc.

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INSIDE SECTION
2
TODAY



ECONOMICS
Janet Bush on
Tony Blair's
European dilemma
PAGE 27



ARTS
Joanna MacGregor:
free spirit of
the piano
PAGES 31-33



LAW
All change, as Lord
Chancellor reshapes
world of lawyers
PAGES 35, 37

**VIEIRA
VERDICT
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ARSENAL**
Page 44

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

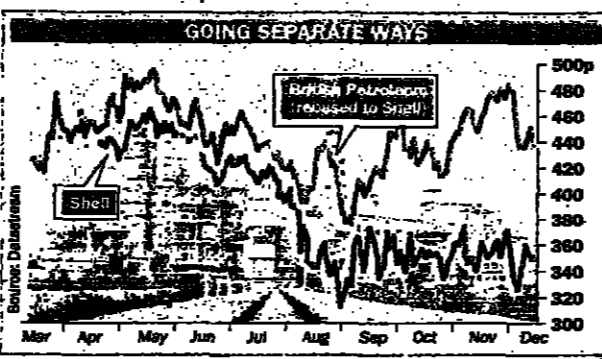
TUESDAY DECEMBER 15 1998

Factory gate inflation at lowest level on record

By MATTHEW BARBOUR
FACTORY gate inflation in November fell to its lowest level since records began, providing further evidence that inflationary pressures have been squeezed out of the economy.
Underlying producer output prices — excluding food, drink, tobacco and petrol — fell 0.5 per cent compared with October. This left prices only 0.1 per cent up on a year ago, the lowest annualised rise since 1958.
The new figures added to the clamour from industry and unions for further cuts in interest rates to prevent the manufacturing sector slipping into outright recession.
Mark Miller, UK economist at Morgan Stanley, said: "The output prices suggest a complete lack of inflationary pressure further back in the supply chain. With the outlook for the manufacturing sector still weak and survey evidence still soft, it is likely that there will be further declines in factory gate inflation in the months ahead."
Input prices also remain subdued, falling 0.6 per cent in November to give an annual fall of 8.5 per cent. The key downward pressure on raw materials in November came from crude oil prices, which fell 9 per cent on the previous month. This is a fall of 41 per cent on the same period last year.
Stephen Lewis, chief economist with Monument Derivatives, said: "It should now be very clear that prolonged recession is a more realistic threat than an upturn in the inflation rate."
The markets are now focusing on retail price figures today to see whether underlying inflation has fallen below the Government's 2.5 per cent target.
Interest rate futures markets responded to yesterday's producer price figures by pricing in a fall in the base rate from the current 6.25 per cent to 5.54 per cent by March and 5.15 per cent by June.
Separate figures yesterday showed that construction output in the UK during 1998 fell to half the level in 1997.
The National Council of Building Material Producers (BNMP) forecast that, over the next three years, construction output will grow by only 1.5 per cent compared with 3 per cent last year.
The FTSE 100 index of leading shares closed little changed yesterday, down 72 points at 5,534.5. The close represented a recovery from an earlier low of 5,461.7, prompted by falls in the Far East overnight and last week's weak finish on Wall Street. The factory gate figures were seen to be largely in line with expectations.

Shell to wipe out bulk of profit in \$4.5bn write-off

By CARL MORTISHED, INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDITOR
THE chairman of Shell put his job on the line as he set out a drastic programme of asset write-downs and disposals aimed at restoring the Anglo-Dutch oil group's flagging performance.
The company is writing off \$4.5 billion (£2.68 billion) of oil and chemical assets, a move which could wipe out most of Shell's profit for the current financial year. In addition, it plans to shed 40 per cent of its troubled chemicals portfolio.
The City was stunned to learn that Shell is selling a half share in the polypropylene business, Montell, acquired only 14 months ago for \$2 billion from Montedison. The oil company is also writing off up to half of the \$1.45 billion cost of its bid for Tejas Gas, the Texan pipeline company taken over in September last year.
Mark Moody-Stuart, the Shell chairman, said yesterday that Shell had paid too high a price for the Texan pipelines and, referring to the chemical disposals, he admitted that it was "a lousy time to sell". But he said that Shell had too often in the past poured money into failing projects. He said: "It would be too easy, or 'Shell-like', to put it off and say maybe it will be better if we wait."



Mr Moody-Stuart said there would be further streamlining of the executive structure of the business, following the appointment last week of chief executives for each product sector. "I will ensure that we have the right people in place to deliver on our promises. If we identify obstacles in our system at any level they will be removed." Referring to his own position, he said: "I am sure there will be consequences if I don't deliver."
Shell's chairman said there would be further job losses, part of a cost-reduction programme aimed at delivering \$2.5 billion in overhead reduction by 2001. He said: "It is unavoidable but it will be a significant number." However, he said that the bulk of the new attrition would be overseas with most of the UK losses already accounted for. Shell has recently announced 4,000 job losses out of a group total of 105,000.
The oil company is targeting a return on capital of 14 per cent by 2001 based on an average \$14 oil price, capital investment of \$11 billion a year and

an oil production increase of 10 per cent over three years.
Some analysts were scathing about the Tejas gas write-down and sale of Montell. Others thought Shell's cost-reduction target too modest, claiming that most of the return on capital target would be achieved by writing down assets rather than growing profits. "It's all in the denominator with nothing in the numerator."
Shell is selling 40 per cent of its \$18 billion chemicals portfolio, shedding the more specialised businesses, including PET (used in plastic bottles), PVC, resins, elastomers, polyurethane foam and the new product Carilon. It will keep petrochemicals and bulk polymers. Write-downs include up to \$2 billion of oil-producing assets in California, Texas and Venezuela and more than \$1 billion in chemicals and up to \$700 million for Tejas Gas. Shell also aims to cut its cost per barrel upstream from \$3.30 to \$2.50 by 2001.



Mark Moody-Stuart outlined the measures aimed at restoring Shell's fortunes, but some analysts were critical of the emphasis on cutting costs rather than on increasing revenues

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES
FTSE 100 5534.5 (-7.2)
FTSE All Shares 2530.81 (-5.48)
New York 14111.62 (-294.02)
Dow Jones 8758.16 (-83.60)
S&P Composite 1182.53 (-13.83)
US RATE
Federal Funds 5.75% (5%)
Long bond 104.25* (103.9)
Yield 4.98%* (5.02%)
LONDON MONEY
3-month interbank 5% (6.4%)
Life long gr future (Mar) 118.56 (118.77)
STERLING
New York 1.6685* (1.6890)
London 1.6672 (1.6822)
DM 2.7878 (2.7816)
FF 1.3492 (1.3292)
SF 2.2522 (2.2426)
Yen 194.74 (196.87)
£ index 100.5 (100.4)
Tokyo close Yen 115.80
NORTH SEA OIL
Brent 15-day (Feb) \$10.35 (\$10.10)
GOLD
London close \$291.55 (\$290.55)
* denotes midday trading prices

Tarmac's Aggregate merger falls apart

By CHRIS AYRES
THE £1.8 billion merger of Tarmac and Aggregate Industries dramatically fell apart last night after Aggregate demanded that Sir Neville Simms, Tarmac's chief executive, drastically reduce his role in the enlarged company.
As part of the no-premium deal, Tarmac and Aggregate planned to merge their building materials businesses, and sell off Tarmac's construction division. According to those close to the deal, Sir Neville was to be executive chairman of the demerged construction division and non-executive chairman of the enlarged group.
Peter Tom, Aggregate's chief executive, was to run the business on a day-to-day basis, and would share the chairmanship of the enlarged group's integration committee with Sir Neville. According to insiders at Tarmac over the weekend Aggregate demanded that Sir Neville give up his non-executive chairmanship of the enlarged group, as well as his position of the company's integration committee.
"This was a significant last-minute rule change which would lock out Tarmac people," an insider said last night. "By excluding Sir Neville, Aggregate unbalanced the deal and turned it into a takeover."
Insiders at Aggregate said Sir Neville's ambitions become clear only at the last minute, and created a clear conflict of interest between his position at Tarmac's construction business and his position at the enlarged group.

Emap on verge of US acquisition

By RAYMOND SNOODY, MEDIA EDITOR
EMAP, the magazines, radio and exhibitions group, is on the verge of its biggest acquisition, the \$1.1 billion (£655 million) purchase of Petersen, the US magazine publisher.
The deal, which could be announced as early as today, would not only take Emap into the US for the first time, but would also make the British company one of the world's largest magazine publishers.
Petersen, a consumer magazine publisher, is best known for titles such as *Hot Rod* and *Guns and Ammo*.
Yesterday Emap would only confirm that it is in talks with Petersen. In New York the Petersen share price shot up more than \$10 to get close to the \$34 a share that Emap is believed to be offering. Emap's shares in London fell 74p to £10.50 amid worries about the size of the acquisition and fears of a profits dilution.
Richard Dale, media analyst at Salomon Smith Barney, said: "This is a bold move but it is a departure from their historically more cautious route and the risks are also greater."
Kevin Hand, Emap's new chief executive, wants to launch *FFM*, its young men's title, in the US and the talks with Petersen may have begun as joint venture negotiations.
With operating profits of \$90 million expected for this year on revenues of \$300 million, Emap would be paying about 13 times profits. The City expects Emap to use a rights issue to fund as much as \$400 million of the purchase.

De Beers rough sales fall further

By JON ASHWORTH
SALES of rough diamonds by De Beers have fallen to their lowest level since 1987, adding to the pressures on the London-based Central Selling Organisation (CSO), which regulates about 70 per cent of world diamond supplies.
Tarmac in the Far East left CSO sales 28 per cent lower at \$3.34 billion (about £2 billion) in 1998. Worrying for the CSO, an expected pick-up in sales has failed to materialise, leaving second-half sales 3 per cent lower than in the first half, at \$1.64 billion. These were 7 per cent lower than in the same period in 1997. Last year's second-half sales were in turn 30 per cent down on the first half of 1997.
The CSO has cut back on the number of diamond-buying "sights", at which buyers receive allocations of rough gems, in an attempt to clear a backlog at the cutting centres. This has left it sitting on a stockpile of \$4.1 billion — equivalent to a year's sales — although individual mines are taking some of the strain, through a system of quotas.
Hopes remain pinned on America, which speaks for more than a third of diamond jewellery sales. US retail sales in the first half were up 7 per cent. However, retail demand in Japan, the second largest market, is 20 per cent down on 1997 in dollar terms. Polished imports in Hong Kong are 40 per cent below 1997 levels and analysts fear De Beers, which held its interim dividend, could cut the final dividend.

Goldman suffers earnings setback

By RICHARD MILES, BANKING CORRESPONDENT
GOLDMAN SACHS, the exclusive Wall Street investment bank which shelved its market flotation in September, has reported a dramatic slump in fourth-quarter earnings.
Earnings for the three months to November 27 plummeted to \$107 million (£67 million) from \$567 million in the comparable period in 1997, reflecting the difficult conditions in capital markets during the autumn.
While fourth-quarter earnings dropped by more than 80 per cent, revenues for the period fell by 40 per cent to \$915 million. As a result, year-end pre-tax earnings slipped by 3 per cent to \$2.9 billion.
Amid reports that bonuses for some London staff had been cut to below 10 per cent of salary, John Thain, chief financial officer, said the fourth-quarter results reflected the "extraordinarily difficult business environment" of the autumn. He said: "Along with most other participants in the financial services sector, certain key businesses were negatively impacted by the turmoil in the global financial markets, including, in particular, our credit and relative value trading activities."
As a private partnership, Goldman Sachs is not obliged to reveal its exposure in Russia, where the Government effectively defaulted on its foreign debt, nor to Long Term Capital Management, the US hedge fund that nearly collapsed. The firm has firmly denied trading losses of \$1 billion and upwards.

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JANET BUSH

Blair's European dilemma



Tony Blair, at the EU summit in Vienna, faces two ways on European policy — but can he steer his counterparts down the 'third way'?

Tony Blair argued in *The Times* yesterday that a majority of Europeans are not part of a vile conspiracy to noble Britain, bent on, as he put it, "preventing tax competition to ensure that countries with inefficient social systems, or high taxes, which don't want to reform, can avoid change by ensuring that others' costs match theirs". The Prime Minister is only half right.

It is true that the dynamics of the current European political scene are not as one-sided as they have often seemed in recent weeks. Talk of supply-side reform in Europe, roughly along the lines of Mr Blair's Third Way, has certainly disappeared from view since the advent of the new German Government and its public domination by Oskar Lafontaine. With Red Oskar's push for a demand-led response to Germany's unemployment problem, his public beratement of the European Central Bank on interest rates, the drive towards tax harmonisation and getting rid of Britain's veto, reformers have appeared to retreat into a Trappist minority.

In an attempt to respond to Mr Blair's plea for balance in the European debate, it should be said that there are still voices in Europe arguing that mass unemployment will not be solved by more demand alone but that structural rigidities in European labour markets and overgenerous social security have to be tackled.

In the early days of the German administration, Gerhard Schröder did very little to counter the impression given by his Finance Minister that the supply-side agenda had been knocked into oblivion by his own demand-side push.

However, the Chancellor has begun to reassess himself. He has appointed Klaus Gretschmann, an economics professor at Aachen University, to head the economic and finance department in the Chancellery. This, in itself, is a short

across the bow of Heiner Flassbeck, Herr Lafontaine's economic guru. Until now, Herr Schröder's team boasted plenty of micro-economists but no macro-economist with the reputation to give Herr Flassbeck a run for his money.

In addition, the Chancellor has insisted that Herr Gretschmann will be appointed Germany's shephal within the Group of Seven, rather than, by 20-year-old tradition, the number two in the Finance Ministry (Herr Flassbeck). So it is Herr Schröder's man who will organise much of the one-year G7 chairmanship that Bonn assumes in 1999.

If Herr Schröder is trying to reassert a reformist agenda against his ebullient Finance Minister, he has had useful, if irksome, support from SPD leaders at state level. Their leading voice is Wolfgang Clement, Premier of North Rhine-Westphalia, and he has told the Chancellor that his current tax reform plans (involving a shift in taxation from consumers to companies) will not help to reduce unemployment. Herr Clement advocates a far more Anglo-Saxon agenda on tax. He wants the top rate to be cut from 52 per cent to below 40 per cent instead of the 48 per cent rate that Germany is aiming to get to by 2002. He wants a minimum rate of income tax to be driven to below 15 per cent from 25.5 per cent currently rather than the 19 per cent sought by Herr Lafontaine. He also wants a 30 per cent maximum rate for corporation tax.

So, supply siders co-exist with new Keynesians in Germany (featured heavily here because of its size and importance in the Euro II) and, to that extent, Europe is not entirely a barren desert for British ideas.

After the Brussels tax harmonisation debacle which found Gordon Brown and Mr Blair humiliatingly wrong-footed by the German and French finance ministers, British officials gamely insisted that the Government would

Britain must take great care if it is not to lose flexibility because others refuse to reform

continue to engage in Europe and press the reformist case. Europe, they said, could opt for old Labour, tax and spend, inward and backward looking economics. Or it could be new Labour, flexible, outward and forward looking and expressed optimism that the latter would win out in the end.

In the end, are the operative words for Britain. Reformist tendencies do exist in Germany. It would be astonishing if they didn't, given the intensifying competitive pressures of a globalised world economy. However, Mr Blair would be naive in the extreme to think that Europe is going to ditch the social market model in its entirety and put rampant neo-classical free market economics in its place within decades.

To start with, Europeans do not like the idea of the Anglo-Saxon model. Voices in America and Britain may deride the European economies for social feather-bedding and cosy relationships between companies, banks and the trade unions. Europeans deride the US and UK for their lack of these.

Europe will strive to make itself more flexible and will not doubt eventually be forced to look at, for example, highly centralised wage bargaining but none of this will be allowed to erode social provision and existing institutional and cultural economic relationships. It will, therefore, happen very slowly.

Germany is a particular

worry. Wage levels are already the highest among industrialised countries, some 24 per cent above those in France and 58 per cent higher than those in Italy. The economic success story of The Netherlands has partly come from a deliberate policy of driving down wages against Germany which operates in very similar areas of manufacturing. The Dutch set themselves a target of reducing their manufacturing wages to 20 per cent below Germany's.

The result has been a surge in exports from The Netherlands to Germany. Far from calling for wage restraint, German government officials have actually been calling for more wage inflation — of between 3 and 4 per cent — as a way of boosting domestic demand and cutting unemployment (a logic that would cause apoplexy on our own Monetary Policy Committee).

Britain could well argue that it is Germany's perfect right to hang itself by following such a route. However, there is a real threat that Germany will respond to this lost competitiveness by doing exactly what Mr Blair yesterday denied was happening: insisting that others are forced, in the name of making the euro work, to give up their own competitive advantages.

Tax harmonisation is not the only issue that Mr Blair and Mr Brown are going to have to fight on. Germany could just as easily start insisting on harmonised or co-ordinated wage setting to get rid of "harmful wage competition" just because it is not prepared to break up its postwar collaboration with the trade unions.

Germany's apparent propensity to demand that Europe indulges in a kind of collective suicide to preserve German competitiveness is a serious issue that should not just frighten the life out of Britain.

The only genuine economic argument in favour of the single currency mobilised for the benefit of British Euroscop-

ics by their European colleagues has been that the lack of monetary and fiscal flexibility that the euro implies would force countries such as Germany and France to embrace supply-side change.

On a current reading of attitudes and policy, it seems that the euro battering ram is going to come up against formidable resistance.

Whether inside the euro or outside, whether at the heart of Europe or at its margins, nothing that Tony Blair or Gordon Brown say will change any of this. Labour's clever young men talk about winning the intellectual argument in Europe and it is, largely, the right one for a forbiddingly competitive world economy. But deciding what type of economy one wants to run is ultimately a political matter, just as new Labour's decision to preserve and then build on the Thatcherite supply-side programme, rather than reverse it, was a political matter.

The most acute danger of the single currency was always a combination of a macro-economic straitjacket and a failure to embrace structural change and this danger is very much present. Is this really a Europe that the Government wants to risk our economy in?

Britain made a choice in the late 1970s to change and that programme has undoubtedly involved uncomfortable trade-offs. A new dynamism among British companies was matched by a new insecurity in people's working lives. A sense of individualism seemed to erode community spirit. Public services started to rot but British productivity stopped falling. The one economic advantage that Britain has is its flexibility — on wages, on taxes and on macro-economic policy. Mr Blair must take great care that this is not voted away in the name of being at the heart of Europe by competitors who refuse to face change themselves.

Community action comes into focus for Internet marketers



JASON NISSE

If you are a relative technophile like me, you will take some satisfaction in learning that the "marketing via the Internet" boom has yet to take off in the UK. Indeed recent figures indicate that, in spite of the millions being spent by companies creating their own websites and the attempts to woo advertisers and sponsors to underwrite this expenditure, advertising on the Net is running at only about £1 million a month in the UK.

This might be an instance of typical British inertia, but more likely it is because the approach to marketing on the Net is particularly unsophisticated. For example, sponsoring a webpage merely gets the advertiser's name emblazoned at the top of the page, or on the search engine, which might bring awareness of the name, but is not exactly selling the Net browser anything. However the best way of solving this problem might be to get the needs of the Internet for a minute or two.

horoscope delivered to you. The mind boggles.

IT MUST be the curse of the BBC Sports Personality of the Year. Michael Owen missed a crucial penalty on Sunday and Arsenal — the team of the year — lost a vital fixture against Aston Villa after being 2-0 up. The timing of this defeat is poor for Arsenal's marketing team, which

MARKET LEADER

has just learnt that JVC, the club's main sponsor, is withdrawing, saying that it wants to concentrate its efforts on backing the 2002 World Cup in Japan and South Korea.

The relationship between the Japanese hi-fi maker and the North London club is the second-longest running in British football and Arsenal is approaching the likes of Mars, Citroën and Ford to see if they will pay the princely sum of £2.5 million a year to feature on the club's shirts.

However, the price demanded by Arsenal might be difficult to achieve. Though Arsenal is

one of the few clubs in the UK that can claim to be an international brand, it does not have the awareness of Manchester United, which is paid £3 million a year by Sharp.

The sponsorship is almost certain to suffer from a certain amount of "JVC hangover", given how long JVC has been involved and the fact it is the only sponsor Arsenal has ever had. Rival electronics companies, for example, may be put off by this, and by seeing clips of the team wearing the old sponsor's shirts.

And then there is the issue of success. Nigel Currie, of Craigie Taylor, the sponsorship consultants, says that the amount of media coverage a football team receives is dependent on its success. So while Arsenal was on the back pages — and even sometimes the front pages — almost continuously over the past 18 months, the club's matches appearing regularly on television, this cannot be guaranteed, particularly if Arsenal does not have good run in the FA Cup. "I would not advise a client to pay this sort of money without strict performance criteria," says Mr Currie.

To show what bad form can do for you, look at Arsenal's North London rivals, Tottenham Hotspur. Its sponsorship is also up for renewal, with Hewlett Packard likely to bow out. A few years ago this contract would have been seen as easily as valuable as that of Arsenal's. The gossip in sponsorship circles is that Spurs will be lucky to achieve more than £1 million a year.



Simon Morris, left, Dan Thompson, centre, and Danny Kelly

In the UK, Direct Network Publishing has tapped into this area. In February the company — formed by Danny Kelly, the radio presenter and former editor of Q magazine, and Simon Morris, who used to run Gingers Productions for Chris Evans — launched Football 365, an online daily sports magazine that is delivered via e-mail. Subscribers receive it free, but have to give all sorts of information about themselves. This is used to customise the paper to their needs, but the information is also used to sell other services. These include mailshots, e-commerce and football chatlines, where sports fans call up other sports fans on premium-rate telephone lines.

Direct, whose chief executive is Dan Thompson, reckons it has 110,000 regular subscribers and on the back of this it is expanding in two different ways. Vertically, it has bought Symphony Telecommunications, which makes systems to run premium-rate phone services. Horizontally, it has already launched Cricket 365 — a joint venture with CrickInfo, the autologically named cricket information service partially owned by Mick Jagger — and Music 365, which is like an electronic version of Q or NME, but allows subscribers to download music sold to them through the Net.

Further planned developments include Money 365, a financial advice services magazine, one on horoscopes, one on tarot, an online dating services magazine and online travel information. There are even plans to cross-market these services, so if you are a superstitious football fan, you can have your favourite player's

Rat race

WHO kidnapped Ratty? Staff at Taylor Woodrow's estates office are furious at the desecration of the Christmas grotto at St Katharine's Dock, next to Tower Bridge. The outdoor display depicted a scene from *The Wind in the Willows*, in which Ratty and Mole walk through the Wild Wood to Badger's house, watched by stoats and weasels with flashing red eyes. But no longer.

On Friday at 11.30pm, security guards at St Katharine's Dock pursued "three men dressed in smart

business suits", one of whom was carrying Ratty's head. They disappeared down a tunnel, and no ransom demand has been received.

"We would dearly love to have him back," said a Taylor Woodrow spokeswoman who explained that Living Props, the film set designers, have no time to replace the lost rat before Christmas. Ratty's head was knocked off by a brick a week ago and suspicion rests that the same set of louts came back to finish him off.

It sounds like an inside job so fingers point at locals: Could it be weasels from Reuters or stoats from the oil trading pit at the International Petroleum Exchange? The staff of *The Times*, a mere rat's scurry from St Katharine's, are in the clear as the vandals were wearing smart suits.

THE decision by the fine Sunderland brewing company, Vaux, to change its name will at last bring an end to the horrible habit of post-city snobs pronouncing the group's name "Vo".

Snap!

IT'S nice to see our regulators agreeing for a change. It appears that the Christmas card sent out by the Financial Services Authority this week, depicting two saplings rising through



the snow, had also been selected by the Lord Chancellor's Department.

Of course, the incident just serves to underline the independence that Lord Irvine's department will show when it acts as the final arbitrator of cases where City malefactors — sorry, alleged malefactors — dispute the disciplinary rulings of the FSA. Either that, or Howard Davies, the FSA's chairman, and his old-mate Derry (better known as Lord Irvine) shop at the same place.

SHOULD Emap buy Peterson, it will end up being the owner of Guns and Ammo, which is said to be the favourite magazine of the doyens of gonzo journalism, Hunter S Thompson. Perhaps the clubable Emap chairman, Robin Miller, might persuade Hunter to write a book about last

year's boardroom bust-up over whether Miller should be chairman. They could call it *Fear and Loathing in Melton Mowbray*.

Dry humour

JUDGING by this year's Christmas gift from the investment trust team of Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, the guys clearly think they are all washed up. Their yuletide message this year — clients will recall their Full Monty card last December — is fetchingly printed on a tea-towel under the banner: "Clean up your portfolio."

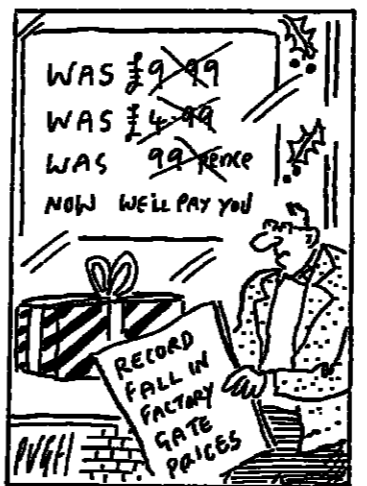
Roger Hullett, head of the team — and for recipients of the tea-towel, the caricature in the bottom-right corner with the Gorbachev mark on his forehead — says the unconventional Christmas message has become a bit of a tradition among the 12-strong investment trust crew.

"We like to do something a little bit different," confesses Roger, who earned the nickname Sheepskin Hullett after last year's episode. Let's hope the clients don't think they have been taken to the cleaners.

IT WAS surely not intentional, but the Chartered Institute of Taxation has discovered that the Inland Revenue, which usually is so helpful about giving out information on tax rebates, has omitted any reference to the blind person's allowance in the Braille version of the Inland Revenue's guide for pensions.

Sucker punch

AS BEFITS a company with its heritage, Glaxo Wellcome has sponsored a programme to save the medicinal leech. Some £54,000 has been invested in the what was, 200 or so years ago, the medical profession's equivalent of taking two aspirin and getting a good night's sleep. The effort has paid off with the recent discovery of the UK's biggest leech population on the Romney Marshes in Kent. But if Glaxo Wellcome wishes to use the discovery to boost its image it has a problem. Conservationists report that a well-fed leech, which can reach six inches in length, has a bite that closely resembles the Mercedes logo.



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Tale of woe for kidnapped Ratty

THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

Main table containing unit trust prices, organized by fund name and category. Includes columns for fund name, unit price, and other financial metrics.

Advertisement for 'FOUND' Audi Used Car Locator. Features a circular logo with the word 'FOUND' and a photograph of a silver Audi car.

Vertical text on the right edge of the page, including the word 'THE TIMES' at the top and other illegible text.

Modest losses at the close

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

Table of stock prices for various sectors including ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, BANKS, BREWERIES, PUBS & REST, BUILDING MATERIALS, CHEMICALS, CONSTRUCTION, DISTRIBUTORS, FOOD MANUFACTURERS, HEALTHCARE, HOUSEHOLD GDS & TEXT, INSURANCE, INVESTMENT TRUSTS, LEISURE & HOTELS, MEDIA, MINING, OIL & GAS, OTHER FINANCIAL, PHARMACEUTICALS, RETAILERS, FOOD, RETAILERS, GENERAL, SUPPORT SERVICES, TRANSPORT, WATER, and ELECTRICITY. Each sector contains a list of companies with their respective stock prices and percentage changes.

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Advertisement for easyJet featuring a graph titled 'Recession?' showing a downward trend, and the text 'A couple of tips to cut the travel budget' with sub-points: '1. Ban Air Miles - it's bribery!' and '2. Fly easyJet'. It includes the phone number '0870 6 000 000' and the website 'www.easyJet.com'.

Table of stock prices for various sectors including ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, BANKS, BREWERIES, PUBS & REST, BUILDING MATERIALS, CHEMICALS, CONSTRUCTION, DISTRIBUTORS, FOOD MANUFACTURERS, HEALTHCARE, HOUSEHOLD GDS & TEXT, INSURANCE, INVESTMENT TRUSTS, LEISURE & HOTELS, MEDIA, MINING, OIL & GAS, OTHER FINANCIAL, PHARMACEUTICALS, RETAILERS, FOOD, RETAILERS, GENERAL, SUPPORT SERVICES, TRANSPORT, WATER, and ELECTRICITY. Each sector contains a list of companies with their respective stock prices and percentage changes.

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Mum's army will take on any secretarial challenge

WHEN Val Hood was made redundant from her secretarial job in 1989, she was 23 days short of the two years that would have entitled her to redundancy pay. She was also two months pregnant.

Harriet Warner on an idea that meets the needs of families and companies

a computer and a printer. She advertised in local papers and repeatedly mailed dozens of companies, offering a secretarial service by which she would take in excess typing or work for them part time.

of a 24-hour turnaround of work. In 1995 expansion became possible. An insurance company shutting its typing pool wished to outsource the work. Mrs Hood tendered for the contract and won. The guaranteed work let her take on three workers.

whole guilt issue of working while your child is with childminders - but then you want to work for the money to bring your kids up. So there is this vast number of women who have tremendous experience, but because of bringing up children, can't take up a full-time job.

The client list has grown to 60, mainly insurance companies, solicitors, accountants, surveyors and research institutes. Work is sent by courier to and from Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds and London, always within 24 hours.



Val Hood, front, with some of the secretarial home-workers serving her growing client list

Mrs Hood believes that EBS is the shape of things to come. She said: "Business is changing. Much more work is outsourced to cut costs. With EBS, there is no wastage, clients don't have the overheads of machinery, office space, pensions, sick pay - they just pay for the typing. I think the future of the workforce in many areas, not just secretarial, is going in the direction of home-working, short contracting and outsourcing."

Mrs Hood ensures that EBS evolves with the changing needs of businesses. She said: "We are compatible with all software packages. We use e-mail, the Internet, we pick up, we deliver, we take shorthand, we transcribe, we translate. Basically, you don't need an office. You just need a phoneline or a dictating machine - we'll do the rest."

For companies that, for security reasons, do not want work to leave the office, Mrs Hood is now launching a recruitment agency to offer security-cleared temps.

EBS is on 0181-657 3261



John Roberts, left, and Alan Morgan, partners in energy efficiency

Utility gives help in saving energy

By IOLA SMITH

SMALL businesses in South Wales could save up to £18 million from their energy bills after the launch of an Energy Efficiency project by Hyder, the multi-utility group, and the Welsh Development Agency.

Funded to the tune of £3.2 million by Hyder's electricity arm, Swalec, and the European Regional Development Fund, the project will provide energy audits and energy efficient equipment for participating small firms.

Seventy businesses in the Monmouthshire area will be the first beneficiaries. Swalec staff will visit each firm in turn to undertake a detailed audit of their energy usage and needs. Swalec will then calculate whether any savings could be made by good housekeeping or by installing equipment that is more energy efficient. If so, it will pinpoint the sum in cash terms.

Then, if the small firm so wishes, Swalec will replace any wasteful equipment without the small business having to make any capital investment. Swalec will be repaid for its efforts from the cash savings that result from the new equipment over five years.

"It is a win, win situation, with businesses using energy efficiency as part of their strategy to minimise costs and remain competitive," said John Roberts, Swalec's chief executive.

Swalec expects that many of the participating small firms will consider replacing their light fittings with energy-efficient alternatives. It also believes that manufacturing businesses will be interested in insulating machinery (particularly injection moulding equipment in the plastics industry) and in improving the efficiency of pumps.

For Alan Morgan, director of business development at the Welsh Development Agency, the initiative "promotes two major elements: competitiveness and sustainable development".

The latter, according to Swalec, will be crucial as energy efficiency reduces the emissions of greenhouse gases. It is estimated that over the project's lifetime, energy consumption in South Wales will be reduced by up to 300 million units of electricity and carbon dioxide output should be cut by 100,000 tonnes.

Tell-tale clues of festive greetings

By RODNEY HOBSON

CORPORATE Christmas cards say more than just "Season's greetings", the Royal Mail reckons. They contain tell-tale signs about the sender.

Most companies leave the final decision to the chief executive and agonise over the card's contents, so they recognise its importance, says Charles Darley, Royal Mail's director of business marketing.

Professor Tim Wheeler, to analyse card types. He says: "Poetry chosen Christmas cards send the wrong signals and do not fit in with the company's brand or corporate image. They are an excellent way for businesses to keep in touch with their customers, but it is important to recognise what sending a particular type of card says about you."

According to Professor Wheeler: "A traditional Christmas scene indicates a reliable organisation and is seen as a genuine gesture of thanks."

Humorous cards indicate that, no matter how big the company, it still has a human touch and will handle customers sympathetically. Novelty three-dimensional cards are much loved by advertising agencies and companies that put a premium on creativity, and the cards' originality commands the best position on the recipient's desk and often keeps them there long after Christmas.

BRIEFINGS

Four more associations have joined the Better Payment Practice Group, a partnership between the public and private sectors campaigning to cut late payment of business debts. The new members are the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, the Credit Services Association, the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales and the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants.

AZTEC, the Tec for southwest London, is merging with Business Link South West and will operate from the Link's Putney premises. A database for small and medium-size businesses, covering issues such as venture capital and effects of regulations and tax, has been produced by the Department of Trade and Industry, the Institute of Small Business Affairs and the Small Business Research Trust. Copies are £150 with updates every two years at £75. Contact Beverly Porter-Blake on 01908 658831.



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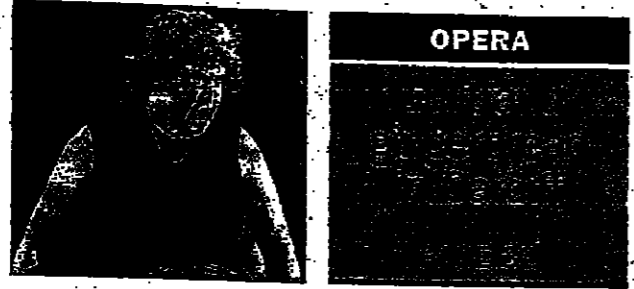
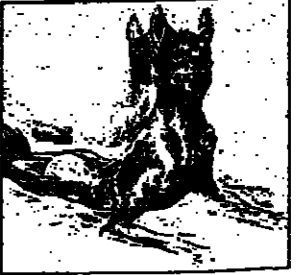
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THE TIMES ARTS

VISUAL ART
Dog or man?
Nicola Hicks's
strange world
PAGE 33



The piano's grand... but there's more

MUSIC: Never one to stagnate, the versatile Joanna MacGregor now has her own record label. She talks to John Allison

Several leading pianists are appearing in the South Bank's current International Piano Series, but one programme stands out: tonight's recital by Joanna MacGregor, in which the only dead composer being featured is John Cage. Taking its title from Cage, the concert — called "Perilous Night: Originals, Responses and Variations" — is an adventurous mixture typical of this most open-minded of pianists.

But what exactly is typical MacGregor? Hard to say, because even the scope of this programme, whose composers range from contemporary classical to cutting-edge jazz and club culture figures, represents only some aspects of her musical personality. Her repertoire stretches from Elizabethan keyboard composers such as William Byrd to unreconstructed modernists like Harrison Birtwistle, and crosses boundaries by taking in non-Western influences.

Alongside her playing, the evangelical MacGregor has somehow found time to teach at Liverpool Hope University College and the Royal Northern College of Music, hold a professorship at Gresham College, sit on the Arts Council and set up a record label. Indeed, tonight's concert marks the launch of that label, SoundCircus. "It was a logical step for me," she says. "It gives me the chance to promote young musicians like the jazz pianist-composer Nikki Yeoh, with whom I work.

"Everybody pays lip service to the concept, but there's nothing worse than being in your early twenties and trying to get a gig. I know how hard it is to get people to take you seriously. It also gives me the chance to record some of the music I've been doing live, especially the unusual programmes that just don't fit into the classical-label way of doing things."

Although MacGregor enjoyed a supportive working relationship when she was with Collins Classics, she says she got frustrated with the highly structured music

business. "I heard a lot about not mixing composers, not being able to do this and that because the distributors wouldn't know where to put it. The shops can't cope: they force me to go upstairs to classical, downstairs to jazz, sideways to techno, and I wanted to make records that would encompass all of those."

Deliberately, perhaps, the new discs will not be packaged in the usual CD format, but with cardboard covers to look more like film books. "I can't believe that people out there are so anorak that they only want things to be a certain

'It's easy to underestimate how hungry audiences are for new musical experiences'

size. I assume that they all have books, so they can put them on bookshelves. There's an audience out there that's one step ahead, that wants to have all kinds of music together. There's a tendency to underestimate how hungry audiences are for new experiences."

MacGregor talks of finding outlets for her discs in bookshops or cafes, and already they are available on the Internet and by mail-order from *Unknown Public*, the subscription-only creative music journal. She plans to take them out on the road with her, which could mean practically anywhere.

"I tour a bit in America and a lot in Europe, Holland especially, where they have this forward-looking music scene because they got through the barriers 15 years ago. They gobble up the things I do. I go to the Far East — I like working with the orchestra in Singapore — but my favourite places tend to be

the ones where it's more than turning up and doing a big concert."

At the moment, those favourite places are South Africa and Australia. "Next month I go to the Sydney Festival, where I've persuaded them to do the Lou Harrison concert. As penance, though I don't mind it, I have to play the Gershwin concerto in the first half. And I hope to return year after year to South Africa, where I've been with the National Symphony Orchestra into Soweto. Education work is being done there for the first time. Previously they had never bothered to find new audiences, and now they are starting into an abyss which we may face too. Events there are a fast-forward version of what could happen here."

"I'm becoming very interested in non-Western things, and in Europe a lot of what's offered to me is the Western tradition I've grown up with. Now I've got to find a way out, but the problem is that the piano is just about as Western as you can get. The piano's my instrument, and I wouldn't want it any other way, but I'm gravitating quite naturally towards things that have developed my sense of rhythm.

"I've come to all this incredible Indian classical music and its more modern formations late in the day; the Messiaen I've played has led me down that road, and I've been following my nose all the time."

Her interest in Cage, whose prepared piano works evoke distant sound worlds, has surely been a part of this process. Equally, so has the Elizabethan music, which she describes as "ancient but very modern, with things like jazz riffs flying off. The freedom of improvising over a bass line disappeared from music only in the 19th century, and we're still paying for it. There's a culture among classical musicians of being passive, and it stems from following the notes, rather than one's own instincts."

MacGregor enjoys an astonishing success rate when commissioning living composers, as those who hear some of the responses to Cage



Joanna MacGregor: virtuoso pianist, Arts Council member, champion of new music, impresario, and now the founder of a new record label

this evening will discover. "The key to commissioning is inviting the composer to have fun, because writing for the piano can be a frightening burden. It's a difficult instrument to compose for, everybody's done it, and it lays you bare be-

cause there has been this incredible history of fantastic keyboard music."

When last, then, did she play Rachmaninov's Second Concerto? "A very long time ago. I got my apprenticeship, with the Young Concert Artists Trust, playing all these

warhorses in Raymond Gubby concerts. Some are not for me anymore, but I'd still play the Grieg at the drop of a hat: it's so fresh. I'm very careful to keep on playing a lot of mainstream repertoire. I'm not into being the court jester who just

does the wacky stuff. Making the connections and taking people down new paths is what I enjoy."

● Joanna MacGregor plays at the Queen Elizabeth Hall (0171-960 4242) tonight at 7.45pm

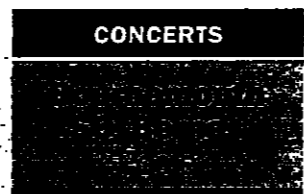
I t was a tricky moment for the management of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra when their chief guest conductor Kees Bakels pulled out of their concert at Poole Arts Centre: Ives's Second Symphony is not in every conductor's repertoire. Fortunately, a replacement was found in Richard Bernas, who was able to take over the programme intact, including the Ives — a comparative rarity in this country.

The work's neglect in Britain probably has less to do with Ives's iconoclasm — the Second is tame when compared with the cacophonous eccentricities of the Fourth — than with its Americanness. Woven into its fabric are Yankee tunes such as *Columbia*, the *Gem of the Ocean* and *Turkey in the Straw* which are unknown to many Europeans. Their jollity livens up movements like the second, which

Stand in and be accounted

can seem prolix and texturally unvaried. Certainly, demotic interpersions of this sort seem less outrageous to our Post-Modernist ears than they did to Ives's contemporaries.

"The orchestra took all this in its stride and appeared quite unfazed by the complexities of the score. Accurate in pitch, taut in ensemble, resonant in timbre, it demonstrated just how high standards have risen in Bournemouth in recent years, under first Andrew Litton and then Yakov Kreizberg. Bernas kept things on a tight rein: perhaps too tight in the central Adagio, where a touch more sentimentality would not have been out of place, but



there was rhythmic zest in abundance.

The orchestra made an impressive contribution too in Beethoven's Violin Concerto: animated strings, sweet-toned woodwind and reliable brass all made an ideal backdrop for the soloist.

The young German virtuoso Isabelle Faust brought a number of qualities to her ac-

count, among them a full, resonant tone and impeccable intonation. But she has a curious way of joining every phrase together, creating a seamless line broken only by obligatory rests. The effect is to rob her playing of shape, denying phrases their natural breathing space and threatening to squeeze all life from them. She opened up more in the Larghetto, where the nature of the writing for the solo violin forced air into her phrasing, and the finale was at least technically accomplished.

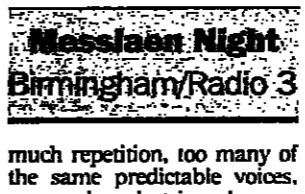
In Beethoven's *Name Day Overture*, Op 115, there was little that could be done to disguise the flat-footed, four-square cut of the material, but the energy generated by the players under Bernas's direction made ample amends.

BARRY MILLINGTON

Disciples pay tribute to maître

RADIO 3 devoted six hours last Thursday to a celebration of Olivier Messiaen, marking what would have been the French composer's 90th birthday. At the evening's heart was a concert by the excellent Birmingham Contemporary Music Group conducted by George Benjamin. He also spoke brilliantly about both man and music, and his well-informed passion was nicely balanced by the composer Alexander Goehr's shrewdly observant scepticism.

Otherwise, in no fewer than four discussion programmes that came between the three concerts in Birmingham and in the intervals, there was too



much repetition, too many of the same predictable voices, too much pedestrian observation and too much mispronunciation to make this a uniformly enjoyable celebration.

Messiaen would, however, have been delighted by the presentation of his music. Peter Donohoe's devastating execution of *Canteyodjaya* at the end of his early-evening recital in the Adrian Boult Hall and Pierre Laurent Aimard's unflinching spontaneity in *La Rousselle effarvate* in the middle of the BCMG concert in the CBSO Centre were outstanding examples of the wholehearted commitment that Messiaen's piano music can inspire. As for Messiaen's pupils, there have surely never been more convincing performances of Xenakis's *Jalons* and Boulez's *Mémoriale* than those given by the BCMG under the direction of Benjamin, who went on to conduct a presumably even more authoritative interpretation of his own 1980s classic *At First Light*.

Two new scores were commissioned for the BCMG for the occasion, both of them short and both also from Messiaen pupils. Detlev Müller-Siemens contributed a wittily but also touchingly allusive *Light Blue*, *Almost White* and Goehr most effectively re-scored the far from sceptical Messiaen memorial movement (*Kein Gesangs, nur ruhiger Schlaf*) from his recent *Schlussorgel* for viola and orchestra.

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A guide to the best available classical recordings, presented in conjunction with BBC Radio 3

HANDEL'S MESSIAH
Reviewed by Brian Kay
"IT HAS fed the hungry, clothed the naked, fostered the orphan, and enriched succeeding managers of the Oratorio, more than any single production in this or any country." So wrote Charles Burney towards the end of the 18th century on the subject of Handel's *Messiah*. Two hundred years later we should perhaps add that the record companies haven't done too badly either.

I've lost count of the number of castaways who have wanted to take Sir Malcolm Sargent's recordings of this work to their desert islands, in the hope of being surrounded in perpetuity by the open-throated voices of the Huddersfield Choral Society. But for that style of performance, my own preference must go to Sargent's arch-rival Sir Thomas Beecham on RCA. "Authentic" it certainly is not, but the sheer joy and exuberance of the singing and playing never fail to delight.

The middle ground is taken by such distinguished Handel conductors as Sir Charles Mackerras and Sir Neville Marriner. On the more "modern" recordings — by which I mean those steeped in current thinking on so-called "authenticity" — there can sometimes be a danger of technical wizardry (and excessive speed) overwhelming spiritual depth. Brilliance and artistry are never in question with the likes of Gardiner, Hogwood, Christophers, Parrott, Christie, and McCreech — each of whom directs a performance of immense distinction. But the one man whose music-making in that style carries an extra smile on every note and every phrase is Trevor Pinnock, whose recording with his English Concert leaps to the top of my pile for its sheer unanimity of thought, lifting the spirits sky high (Archiv 423 630-2, £30.99).

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THE NUTCRACKER: Derek Deane returns to the stage as Drosselmeyer in his own sumptuously choreographed production for English National Ballet. Dances the first night roles of the Sugar Plum Fairy and the Prince...

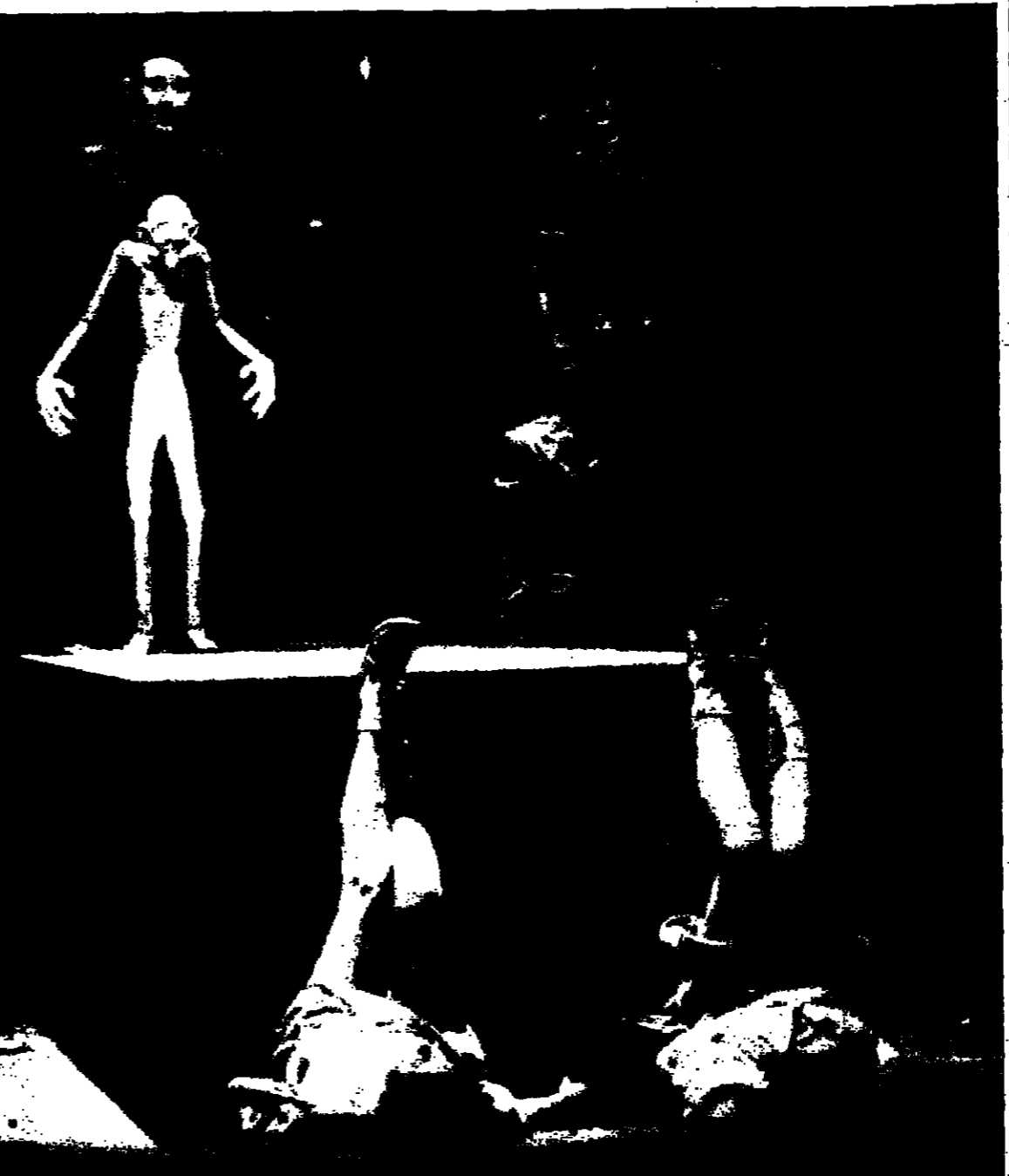


Leonard Slatkin conducts at the Festival Hall

LONDON
THE NUTCRACKER: Derek Deane returns to the stage as Drosselmeyer in his own sumptuously choreographed production for English National Ballet. Dances the first night roles of the Sugar Plum Fairy and the Prince...

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ARTS
Antisocial services



The creepy Sandman (Mary-Louise Aitken) peers down at Imelda Staunton (Hansel) and Linda Kitchen (Gretel)

THE Hansel and Gretel ritual is becoming almost as much a part of Christmas here as it is in Germany. But with one difference. We tend to leave the sugar off the gingerbread. As British producers in London and, most recently, in Glasgow - rifle Frost, Jung and Bettelheim, making it clear what Humperdinck's Grimm little opera is about, it is good to report that, at Welsh National Opera at least, there is no over-heavy directorial thesis for the perusing. But don't expect too much fun...

Opera
Hansel and Gretel
New Theatre, Cardiff
The children leave their dingy white 1950s kitchen for a vast forest space in which lurks quite the nastiest Sandman I have ever seen, a shrunken, yellowish puppet-man. But the angels provide the evening's great setpiece: a slow-motion, all-white choreography of corpulent winged chefs who set a long table until it groans with food.

Theatrical reviews
Orwell that ends well
Theatre
The Donkey Headmaster
Pleasant as London
Angus have written a score comfortably within the range of the mostly young performers. Some ruddy assurances build up the tension in Scazed, and all the songs emerge naturally enough from the action, although they don't do much to advance it.

Jazz
Always read the label
A launch for Colin Towns's record label, Provocateur, this concert was something of a triumph: a near-capacity audience witnessed two impressively stimulating music...

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GALLERIES

An activist at work

ARTS

TOMORROW
'Rising stars': the sequel

Finger on the self-destruct button

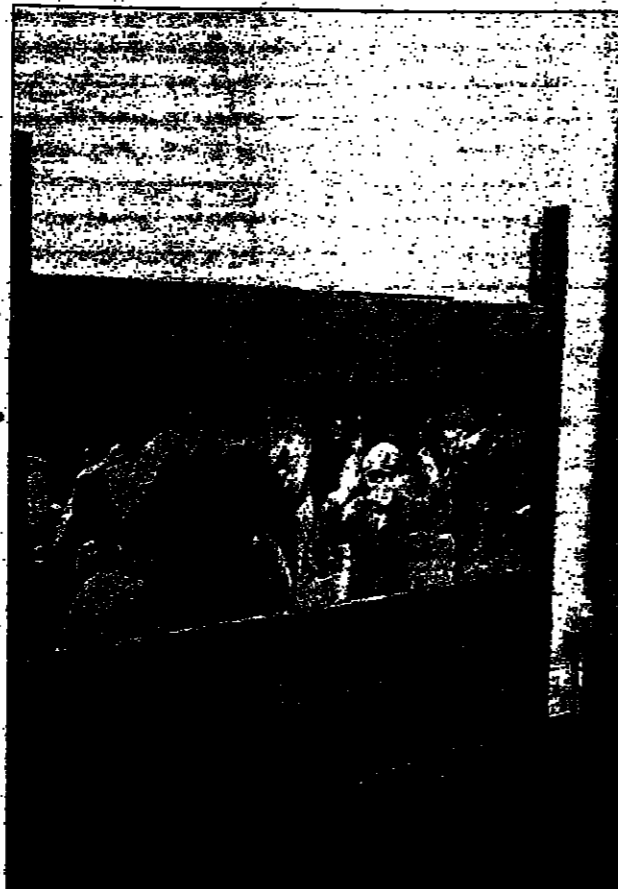
VISUAL ART:
Richard Cork
on Oxford's
showcase for
the haunting
works of
Gustav Metzger

Suimoned by a green-tinted manifesto called *Autodestruction de l'Art*, a crowd assembled at the South Bank, London, on July 3, 1961. The time was 11.45am. Three large nylon sheets, coloured white, black and red, were flapping on a metal frame. They must have looked like an extreme assertion of abstract art at its most minimal, but Gustav Metzger regarded them more as sacrificial victims. Protected by a gas mask, he stepped forward, lifted up a spray gun and covered the sheets in hydrochloric acid. Seconds later they began to disintegrate, and after 20 minutes the ragged remnants had dissolved.

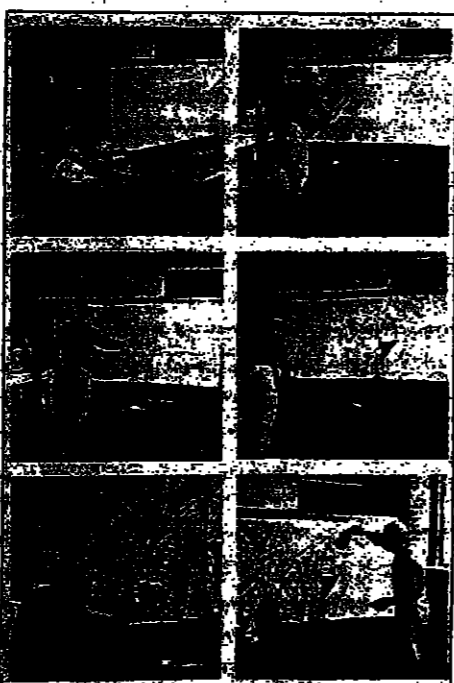
Metzger's choice of site for his historic "demonstration" could hardly have been more ironic. The South Bank was the location, exactly a decade earlier, for a Festival of Britain demonstrating the nation's resurgent ability to banish the horrors of the Second World War. The Festival Hall stood as a permanent symbol of the country's desire to move on. And the International Union of Architects Congress was scheduled to open there, on the very same day that Metzger carried out his auto-destructive ritual.

The architect refused to associate himself with the acid-spraying, regarding it no doubt as the antithesis of everything they hoped to construct in the brave new decade. But now that we know how many greedy blunders were perpetrated by architects and their patrons during the 1960s, Metzger's solitary act of defiance can be viewed in a more sympathetic light. He regarded his art as "an attack on capitalist values and the drive to nuclear annihilation". Growing up as the youngest son of a Jewish Orthodox family in prewar Nuremberg, Metzger had plenty of opportunity to witness the human capacity for oppression. As late as January 1939, the 12-year-old Gustav and his brother Max were sent to England, where they were housed initially in a Butlin's holiday camp. But his parents perished during the Holocaust. Everything on view in his retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art in Oxford has been marked by that overwhelming tragedy.

The trauma must have played its part in ensuring that, after Metzger settled in England, he took a long time to arrive at his auto-destructive maturity. False starts as a furniture-maker led to an involvement with revolutionary left-wing politics, and the writings of Eric Gill. Contact with Henry Moore quickened his ambition to become a sculptor, but the artist who exerted the deepest influence was David Bomberg. After attending Bomberg's legendary life-classes at the Borough Polytechnic, Metzger began painting in a "fast and intense" manner. After moving to King's Lynn



Above, installation in progress of *Historic Photographs: Warsaw Ghetto* (1995). Left, preparing for the London lecture/demonstration, June 1960, at Metzger's King's Lynn studio



in 1953, he developed a commitment to political activism as well. Metzger took heart from the effectiveness of his campaign to protect the town's ancient fishing quarter from redevelopment, and the tactics learnt then must have helped him to launch his auto-destructive initiative a few years later. It remains his most memorable project, although necessarily represented at Oxford only by documentation and maquettes. Metzger dreamt, in a lecture at the Architectural Association in 1965, of erecting machine-made monuments that would eventually destroy themselves. He planned *Five Screens with Computer*, an austere cluster of stainless steel walls to be positioned between blocks of flats. Controlled by computer, thousands of small elements stacked within the screens would gradually be shot out, at different speeds and directions, until the location was once again deserted.

The project was not realised, but in 1966 Metzger did manage to organise an influential, month-long Destruction in Art Symposium in London. Attended by around 100 artists, including Wolf Vostell, Hermann Nitsch, Yoko Ono and John Lennon, this international gathering enabled the

blood-spattered Viennese Actionists to perform for the first time outside their own country. Their visceral, butchered images caused a furor, and the ever-accelerating Vietnam War provided the symposium's proceedings with a sharp, topical urgency.

By this time, though, Metzger wanted to distinguish his own art from destruction *per se*. He felt the need to counter the formlessness of his acid-drenched, tattered and ultimately obliterated paintings with what he called "auto-creative art". As early as 1961 he wrote a manifesto about it, calling for an "art of change, movement, growth". And by the middle of the decade he had found a way of achieving it. Heating liquid crystal on thin glass slides, and projecting them as large-scale, perpetually altering images on screens, enabled him to provide a surprisingly seductive sensory experience. In January 1966 he gave a street display in the window of Better Books, London, warming the chilly surroundings with a spectacular, mesmerising luminosity. As the crystals cooled, they moved from scorching black to a gamut of other colours, all melting into each other and attaining



effects akin to abstract painting at its most sumptuous. Now, more than 30 years later, he is recreating the experience at Oxford with a fully automated version. Helped by the electronic engineer Adrian Fogarty, Metzger has made a computer-programmed display in one of the largest galleries. The darkened room has become an enveloping environment, where six projectors equipped with heating/cooling instruments and rotating polarised filters present an ever-shifting, profoundly meditative experience. Anyone tempted to imagine that Metzger has become lyrical in his old age must, however, move through to the other large gallery, where his fascination with photographs provides the Oxford show's most powerful space.

Walking in, we are confronted close to by a blown-up photograph of *The Ramp at Auschwitz*, where women and children are being separated from men in the summer of 1944. The wall behind our backs does not allow us to become distanced from this distressing image, positioned next to bars redolent of a prison cell. At the far end of the room, an oppressive mood is established by a grim, breeze-block wall with two vertical slits. One wall is filled by a bamboo screen, within which a random generator suddenly illuminates a 1972 photograph of two terrified children fleeing in South Vietnam. Then it flicks off again, and we find ourselves presented on the opposite wall with a large cloth cover. To find out what it hides, we must lift the heavy fabric and insert our bodies between it and the photograph behind. Edging our way along, pressed close against the image, we gradually identify the blurred forms of soldiers and corpses. They are the aftermath of the Massacre on the Mount in 1990, when Jews killed and wounded unarmed Arabs in Jerusalem.



Above, *Liquid Slide Projections* (1965/1998). Left, the Oxford reconstruction of Metzger's 1961 auto-destructive ritual on the South Bank

AROUND THE LONDON GALLERIES

LIKE most mothers with young children, Nicola Hicks can only dream about sleeping. The craving leaks into her art. Sleep is the inspiration of her latest show. On plinths all around the gallery, recumbent bodies slumber. But between them drift and glide and stare the metamorphic figures of some syrupy half-conscious state, of that sliding moment when the mind releases its grip on reality. Huge drawings of horses paper the walls. The wetness muzzles and rubby breath of these animals spell drowsy peacefulness. But other apparitions are less domestic, more menacing. A tiger slinks silently by. A little red kitten-girl looks as if it might claw and spit. And a crow-man steals his thighs for the fluttering hop. Built up roughly from painted pieces and straw, her sculptural capture a sense of that dramatic, magical realm which lies beyond wakefulness. Drawings show the beasts which lurk like a prank inside man. *Flowers East*, 199. Richmond Road, London E8 (0181-985 3333) until Jan 28



Nicola Hicks's *Six Red Figures* (1998) at Flowers East

AN 18-day road-walking journey from the River Rhône at Valence to the Atlantic Ocean. What does this sentence conjure up for you? Shadows of trees sliding over farmland; the sting of the rain; the sharp smell of the sea? It was a journey which Hamish Fulton made in the spring of 1995. But representing it in the gallery he chooses simply to print the stark details of date, time and place on a line of white

tape and stretch it out across a bare floor. As a conceptual artist Fulton is uncompromising. The walk is the art form. But unlike similar landscape artists, Fulton leaves no visual mark behind. He neither builds up nor takes away elements of the landscape, but rather recollects his journeys through lines of words or knotted ribbons or the outline of a pebble. And the viewer is left to imagine the rest from art

works which, paradoxically, are not art works at all. *Annelly Juda Fine Art*, 23 Dering St, London W1 (0171-629 7578) until Dec 18

A NEW initiative to present limited editions of works by high-profile artists at low-profile prices (under £500) finds its first showcase in the foyer of the ICA. Here you can get your hands on the bust of Monica Lewinsky if you buy a book by Kenny Hunter. Or, buying a map of London framed in a maple box by Cornelia Parker, you can choose which area of the capital you wish to see hit by a millennial meteorite. Some of the artists appear to be in playful mood, but others are more contemplative. The most careful piece is by Daniel and Scullion. Floating a compass like a sliver of ice in a Perspex disc, *The Idea of North* points a fragile path to an imaginary nowhere. *The Multiple Store* (0171-514 7258) is at the ICA, The Mall, London SW1, until Jan 15

RACHEL CAMPBELL-JOHNSTON

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CHANGING TIMES

Order for committal defective

Justice better served by strike-out

Regina v St Helen's Justices, Ex parte Jones
Regina v Ealing Justices, Ex parte Saleem
Regina v Stoke on Trent Justices, Ex parte Wilby
Regina v Manchester City Justices, Ex parte Lee
Regina v Greenwich Justices, Ex parte Wright
Regina v Same, Ex parte Davidson

Before Lord Justice Brooke and Mr Justice Sedley
 Judgment November 18
 The High Court had no power under section 43(3) of the Supreme Court Act 1981 to make an order substituting a period of custody imposed by magistrates on a defective order for committal in default of a fine made on conviction, with a shorter period of custody.

...in default of the payment of fines but dismissing their applications to substitute the term of custody imposed under the orders with the term of custody actually served.

Section 43 of the 1981 Act provides that where a person who has been sentenced for an offence by a magistrate is convicted of the offence by a magistrates' court and committed to the crown court for sentence or ordered by the crown court on appeal against conviction of sentence, the High Court in accordance with section 43 for an order of certiorari to remove the proceedings of the magistrates' court or the crown court had to power to pass the sentence, the High Court may, instead of quashing the conviction, amend it by substituting for the sentence passed any sentence which the magistrates' court or, in a case within paragraph (b), the crown court had power to impose.

...as would be the case on a mere quashing of the order.

It was submitted that the court had the power to sign the consent orders because an order of commitment in default of paying a fine ordered to be paid on a conviction was an order "which is made on the conviction of an offender" within the meaning of section 43(3) of the 1981 Act.

...The Lordship said that Parliament was not contemplating by the use of the words "made on conviction" an order for a criminal following a subsequent finding of wilful refusal or culpable neglect to pay the whole or part of a financial order made on conviction.

Section 43(3) was not apt to cover an order subsequent to conviction made for a new intervening offence, namely the wilful refusal or culpable neglect to pay a financial order made on conviction.

Roe v Novak and Another
 Before Lord Justice Simon Brown, Lord Justice Peter Gibson and Lord Justice Schiemann
 Judgment November 27

Where it was clearly established that the plaintiff's inordinate and inexcusable delay had seriously prejudiced the defendant and the possibility of a fair trial, and that the plaintiff had incurred through the defendant's own delay in applying to strike out, justice would generally be better served by striking out the action on terms, rather than by allowing the action to proceed to what was likely to be an unfair trial.

The reluctance of the court to hold hardly needed emphasis. If there was room for two views, then the judge's view must prevail.

That Mr Harris argued, was the position in the present case: the decision could not be stigmatised as so plainly wrong as to give the reviewing court power to interfere.

...strike out, justice would generally be better served by striking out on terms than by allowing the action to proceed to what was likely to be an unfair trial.

On any view the case fell substantially closer to the first of Lord Brown-Wilkinson's postulated extremes than the second: the defendant's actions in the present case were minor compared to the plaintiff's inordinate delay and did not cause the plaintiff major additional expense.

...Second, because the very purpose of an action like the present was supposed to be the vindication of the plaintiff's character. That plainly was something most appropriately done sooner than later if it was to be done at all.

The cause of action pleaded was malicious falsehood. True, the limitation period for that remained six years when, in 1986, for defamation claims it was reduced to three years.

Duty to come to aid of fellow officer

Castello v Chief Constable of Northumbria Police
 Before Lord Justice Hirst, Lord Justice May and Sir Christopher Slade
 Judgment December 3

A police inspector accompanying a colleague for her protection was in breach of a duty of care when she came under attack and he did nothing to help her. There was a duty to comply with a specific or acknowledged police duty where failure to do so would expose a fellow officer to unnecessary risk of injury and the matter could not be left solely to internal police discipline.

LORD JUSTICE MAY said the plaintiff had taken into custody a young woman who had absconded from local authority care.

For the police, reasons the police were under no general duty of care to members of the public for their activities in the investigation and suppression of crime. *Hill v Chief Constable of West Yorkshire* (1989) 1 AC 53. But that was not an absolute blanket immunity and circumstances might exceptionally arise when the police assumed a responsibility to respond to a duty of care to a particular member of the public.

...mentally be seen as a breach of a legal duty of care. The duty was a duty to comply with a specific or acknowledged police duty where failure to do so would expose a fellow officer to unnecessary risk of injury.

There was a strong public policy consideration to be taken into account, namely that the law should accord with common sense and public perception. The judge had been right to say that the public would be greatly disturbed if the law held that there was no duty of care in the case.

...The particular circumstances of the case should not be left solely to internal police discipline. In addition, the public interest would be served if the common law did not oblige police officers to do their personal best in situations such as the one before the court.

LORD JUSTICE HIRST agreeing said the decision should not be interpreted in any shape or form as undermining the general principle laid down in *Hill v Chief Constable of West Yorkshire*.

Business being continued despite lack of work

Pamment v Sutton and Others
 Before Mr Peter Whitehead, QC
 Judgment November 13

Where a business was still continuing to solicit for a particular type of work and retained the capacity to resume work of that kind when the opportunity to do so then arose, business was still being carried out even though that type of work was not presently being carried out.

Mr Peter Whitehead, QC, sitting as a deputy Chancery Division judge, so held in a reserved judgment declaring that by operation of clause 1.2 of a mortgage deed in respect of 4 Bickley Road, Bromley, Kent, dated June 6, 1996, the first and second defendants, Charles John Sutton and John Christopher Sutton, remained under an obligation to repay to the plaintiff, Frederick William Pamment, the sum of £30,000 together with interest from June 5, 1997.

Mr Nicholas Peacock, for the plaintiff, Miss Elizabeth Weaver, for the first and second defendants.

and repair contracts for London Underground Ltd (LUL) which it had acquired on June 6, 1996 from ERS (Lifts and Escalators) Ltd, in which the plaintiff, his son, the third defendant, Mr Terence Pamment, and the first and second defendants had been shareholders.

On August 5, 1997, Tunsli was placed in creditors' voluntary liquidation.

After June 5, Tunsli was still informing present and former employees of the possibility of future LUL work and requesting payment of contract sums and retention money for work done.

...which defined the terms under which such work, if any, was to be undertaken for between the parties was to be undertaken, did not expire until June 30.

On the evidence of the second defendant it was only on August 4, 1997 that Tunsli appreciated that there was no prospect of receiving further work from LUL, as confirmed by a letter from LUL dated August 21, stating that LUL could offer no assistance.

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The Chambers of Robert Starling are pleased to announce that Janice Willis (formerly of Kenworthy Buildings) has accepted an invitation to join Chambers.

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LAW

Would more lords have made a difference to the General?



Augusto Pinochet, seated, lost his appeal by a vote of 3-2

In one of A.P. Herbert's *Misleading Cases* the five members of the Appellate Committee of the House of Lords gave judgment on a controversial point of libel law. After his four brethren had disagreed, 2-2, Lord Goat began his dispositive speech with the words "The law is clear". Then he "suffered a heart attack, perished, and was removed". Happily, there was no such conclusion to the recent 3-2 judgment that General Pinochet is not entitled to immunity from extradition. But the case does confirm the need for a change in procedure in the House of Lords so that exceptional cases are heard by more than five judges.

At any time there are up to 12 law lords in post. Cases are frequently won, and lost, in the Appellate Committee of the House of Lords by three votes to two. In their encyclopaedic study, *Final Appeal* (1972), Louis Blom-Cooper and Gavin Drewry found that between 1952 and 1968, 11 per cent of civil appeals were decided by such a narrow majority.

Recent examples include the case earlier this month refusing compensation to police officers who had suffered psychiatric injury after the Hillsborough disaster; the 1997 decision to overturn the tariffs imposed by Michael Howard, the former Home Secretary, on the youths convicted of killing the toddler James Bulger; the 1995 decision that the Home Secretary had abused his powers by introducing a new criminal injuries compensation

scheme; and the 1993 decision upholding the criminal convictions of sadomasochists for consensual sexual practices.

You needn't be an adherent of the American realist school of jurisprudence (motto: the law depends on what the judge had for breakfast) to believe that it can matter greatly to a decision, and to the development of the law, as to which five of the law lords hear a close case. In dissenting from a 3-2 majority decision earlier this term on the recovery of money paid under a mistake of law, Lord Browne-Wilkinson cited with approval the 1972 statement of Lord Reid that the notion that judges find the law rather than make the law is "a fairytale in which no one any longer believes". Where an appeal is decided by a 3-2 vote, a differently composed Appellate Committee might well have reached the opposite conclusion. Or the presence of a different law lord may have altered the reasoning of the majority.

That the composition of the Appellate Committee can be of significance has been understood at least since 1935, when the Lord Chancellor, Lord Hailsham, wrote to Lord Sankey asking him to sit on an important case. As re-



David Pannick QC

ported in R.E.V. Heuston's *Lives of the Lord Chancellors*, Lord Hailsham's letter explained his concern to avoid asking Lord Atkin to participate since he was "rather apt to take the opportunity of making the law as it ought to be".

As to the general method by which the five law lords are chosen for a specific case, the basic position remains as stated by Louis Blom-Cooper and Gavin Drewry in 1972: "No outsider knows how the five judges are selected." In the Pinochet case, the court was in fact composed of the five most senior law lords available. But, in important cases in the future, the Appellate Committee should consider sitting en banc, that is with all available members participating.

The United States Supreme Court always sits en banc and the European Court of Justice does so in important cases. The new European Court of Human Rights will not sit en banc but, when appropriate, will decide cases in a Grand Chamber of 17 judges. In the Appellate Committee of the House of Lords there have been rare occasions when appeals have been heard by seven judges. Examples include the damages case of *Gourley* in 1955, the national

insurance case of *Jones* in 1971, the defamation case of *Cassell v Broome* in 1971-72, and, most recently, in 1992, *Pepper v Hart* on whether courts may have regard to ministerial statements in Parliament.

For all available law lords to hear an important and controversial case would ensure that the judgment benefits from a fuller range of knowledge and experience. It would add special authority to a decision, especially one that will be analysed throughout the world. And it would lessen the risk that the result would depend on the arbitrary factor of who is selected to hear the particular case.

Of course, there are practical problems that make it undesirable to hold en banc hearings other than in special circumstances. If seven, nine or 11 law lords hear a particular case, other litigants will have to wait longer for their own cases to be heard. There is a real risk that the more judges there are present, the longer a hearing will take. It is not easy to organise an en banc hearing, especially when, as in the Pinochet case, the appeal was heard very speedily. The division of judicial opinion may not be apparent until after the hearing has begun. But there are exceptional cases where the benefits of a hearing before all the law lords outweigh the disadvantages.

The author is a practising barrister and a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford.

Crooked lawyers who keep working

A damning report on the discipline of dishonest and criminal practitioners broadcast on Channel 4's *Dispatches* earlier this month has led to a great deal of confusion.

No one at the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal (SDT) will comment on the programme's claim that more than half of all solicitors found guilty of misusing clients' money have been allowed to continue practising. Barrie Marsh, the SDT president, speaking on the film, also seemed out of line with his own organisation when he said he was "amazed" that solicitors were not struck off for criminal offences of dishonesty.

Despite the peculiar silence of the SDT, the Law Society is surprisingly forthright. With both solicitors and lay people on its panel, the tribunal is independent of the Law Society, which, together with the Office for the Supervision of Solicitors, brings about 200 cases a year against offending practitioners. In 1997, out of 182 cases, 58 solicitors were struck off. David McNeill, the Law Society spokesman, says: "Our view is clear. Any solicitor who is guilty of dishonesty or a serious criminal offence should be struck off. We have been shocked by many of the findings of the SDT."

Dispatches looked at a sample of 200 solicitors most recently brought before the tribunal, of which 78 were found to have misused clients' money. Most remained on the roll of solicitors. Four cases were highlighted in the programme. One examined the tribunal

that suspended Terence Mitchell from practising for 12 months after he was imprisoned for a £250,000 mortgage fraud. The Law Society then successfully appealed that the penalty was too lenient and though Mitchell was then struck off, he continues to work as a clerk. He was secretly filmed advising reporters who posed as clients without telling them that he was not a solicitor. "A solicitor who has been struck off is barred by the regulations from seeing clients and in the light of the programme we will be looking at all the issues raised," says Mr McNeill, who is, however, critical of the programme for blurring the boundaries between the Law Society and the SDT. He claims that *Dispatches* unfairly attacked the society for decisions that are in the tribunal's domain and cites the successful appeal to the High Court in the Mitchell case as proof of this, as well as creating a precedent that the SDT will have to follow.

He adds: "If one solicitor is continuing to practise who should have been struck off, that is a worry. Our regulations are very

Preventing lawyers who have been struck off from practising is a tricky business, says Danny Lee

... but we do not make the final decisions. We are the prosecuting authority."

In another case the tribunal fined Tony Darnell who was convicted of forgery in the Crown Court. The tribunal still did not strike him off the roll when he appeared before it, having disregarded a ruling that prevented his appearing as a solicitor in court. He then became a leading criminal practitioner in Stockport, but was eventually struck off after being convicted of drug-dealing and sentenced to 11 years in jail.

Further damaging the public image of solicitors, already tarnished by criticism of fees and the standard of service offered to clients, the affair is clearly creating animosity between the Law Society and the SDT. One society insider would like to see the tribunal thrown out of the society's premises so that the public gets the message that the two organisations are run separately.

In financial terms, though, the Solicitors' Indemnity Fund (SIF), an insurer for solicitors for client compensation claims, has more to lose than most through crooked practi-

tioners. Sharon Bolton, the spokeswoman, says: "It is in everyone's interest that there is no dishonesty in the profession. To the extent that the numbers of claims against solicitors are high, we have an interest in reducing them."

She points out, however, that "the number of claims arising from dishonesty is not huge".

Between 1994 and 1998 only 6 per cent of claims by value against the fund involved the dishonesty of a partner in a practice. A further 1 per cent involved the dishonesty of an employed solicitor. The rest are to do with malpractice, such as negligence.

Despite these limited numbers, the SIF will, when it receives a claim, report any reasonable doubts about honesty to the Office for the Supervision of Solicitors. "Last year," Ms Bolton says, "we reported 93 claims to the OSS because we had a suspicion of dishonesty."

Most practitioners have an interest in seeing tough penalties meted out to crooks, who undermine public confidence. Indeed, it is solicitors who are being asked to pay ever greater amounts in indemnity premiums to cover claims by clients.

The Law Society is unequivocal. Mr McNeill says: "We would not want any rotten solicitor to have the impression that he or she can get away with it."

But so long as the SDT stays silent, there will be disquiet as practitioner and public confidence in the regulation of solicitors is weakened.



Practice does not make perfect: any solicitor guilty of dishonesty or a serious criminal offence should be struck off

THE Law Society has appointed Biss Lancaster to improve its image. The advertising agency has until the middle of 1999 to carry out what some see as a mission impossible: create a "positive image" for solicitors and improve the way the society communicates with members.

The move comes as the society, which represents 70,000 solicitors in England and Wales, is in for an upheaval. A special council meeting last week voted to conduct a purge of its bureaucracy and scrap a whole layer of committees — more than one third of the 160 committees were abolished.

The reform programme is being overseen by Kamlesh Bahl and Robert Sayer, deputy vice-president and vice-president respectively. Council members now without a job are still reeling. Some believe that the move is too drastic but may be needed if the society is to modernise.

□ VISITORS to the law firm Olswang's website be warned — especially if you

Legal DIARY

It has incorporated a musical Christmas card into its website. Click on the card and you are confronted with a picture of a Christmas tree being decorated as a well-known carol blares out of your computer's speakers.

□ TONIGHT the senior partners from many of the country's top firms meet at the Law Society to discuss how they can improve the quality of life of their hard-working juniors (the assistant solicitors).

The initiative is the brainchild of the Young Solicitors' Group, which believes that firms will get more from assistants and keep their loyalty longer if they work to reduce their stress levels.

"There are increasing levels of concern within the profession that stress at work poses significant problems," says Kam-

lesh Bahl, the Law Society's deputy vice-president, who is chairing the meeting. "While these problems can be particularly chronic for young solicitors, they affect all members of the profession and can diminish solicitors' satisfaction with their jobs and quality of life."

□ COLLYER-BRISTOW, the Holborn law firm, which runs an art gallery, has gone for a designer Christmas tree this year in place of the usual tree lights and fairy. Made from mosaic and pipes by Duncan Hooson, a London-based ceramic artist, the tree now adorns Collyer-Bristow's reception area.

The firm's Christmas art exhibition is a charity show of 150 works, each selling for £150. Proceeds will go to the St Martin-in-the-Fields Art Group, which is the centre for artists without homes.

□ Queen's Counsel III: *Laying Down the Law*, the latest volume of essays from the chambers in 4 Lawn Buildings, is now available for £5.99 (hardback RRP £7.99). To order, phone The Times Bookshop on 0990-134-459.

don't want to be the centre of attention in your office or library. Like other law firms, Olswang is not sending Christmas cards but is donating the money that this would have cost to charity.

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LEGAL APPOINTMENTS

Banking & finance lawyers

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INSOLVENCY LITIGATION To £60,000
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CONSTRUCTION/PFI To £90,000
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PENSIONS To £58,000
There are major career opportunities for recently-qualified lawyers either with experience of pensions or keen to train, as this is a big growth area with a major shortage of talent. Just look at this top 5 City firm, which offers a high-profile and lucrative future if you have a 1 year's ppe. Ref: T80675

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What makes this top 5 City firm different is the genuine care it takes of its lawyers, with regular checks to ensure a proper work-life balance is maintained. With top clients and career opportunities, it adds up to a great move for non-contentious employment lawyers with 3+ years' ppe. Ref: T81252

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CORPORATE TAX To £85,000
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Industry & private practice

Meeting the assistants
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Industry
Sanya Rawler, Monica Lewis, Deborah Kirkman, Stuart Morton

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SWIMMING

Revitalised Britain close gap

By CRAIG LOR

NATIONAL Lottery funding and the greater professionalism that financial muscle has demanded were at the root of a superb performance by Great Britain at the European short-course championships that ended in Sheffield on Sunday.

Britain closed the gap on Germany in dramatic fashion. In 1996, the Germans won 14 of the 38 titles at the championships in Rostock, with the British tally only four, courtesy of Mark Foster and Susan Rolph. This time, German supremacy in Europe was reduced to ten titles, with Britain rising from fourth to runners-up in the table with seven gold medals, shared among five swimmers.

None of those five victories was "soft". James Hickman set a world record in the 100 metres butterfly and won the 200 metres butterfly, in which he already held the world record, and the 200 metres medley ahead of both the world champion and world record-holder, Foster set two world records over 50 metres freestyle in one day, replacing Alexander Popov, one of the greatest sprinters that the sport has produced.

Graeme Smith's victory in the 1,500 metres freestyle is high on the list of those who follow the best of Australia's iron men of the pool, Adam Whitehead, at 18 the youngest in the 200 metres breaststroke, clocked the fifth-fastest time ever for his first international title, while Rolph claimed yet another Commonwealth record on her way to triumph in the 100 metres freestyle.

There was depth in Britain's progress, too, with five silver medals and nine bronze, bringing the national squad to tally in two of Germany's total tally of 23, a factor that Deryk Snelling, the Britain national performance director, was keen to emphasise. "We have not only achieved world records and

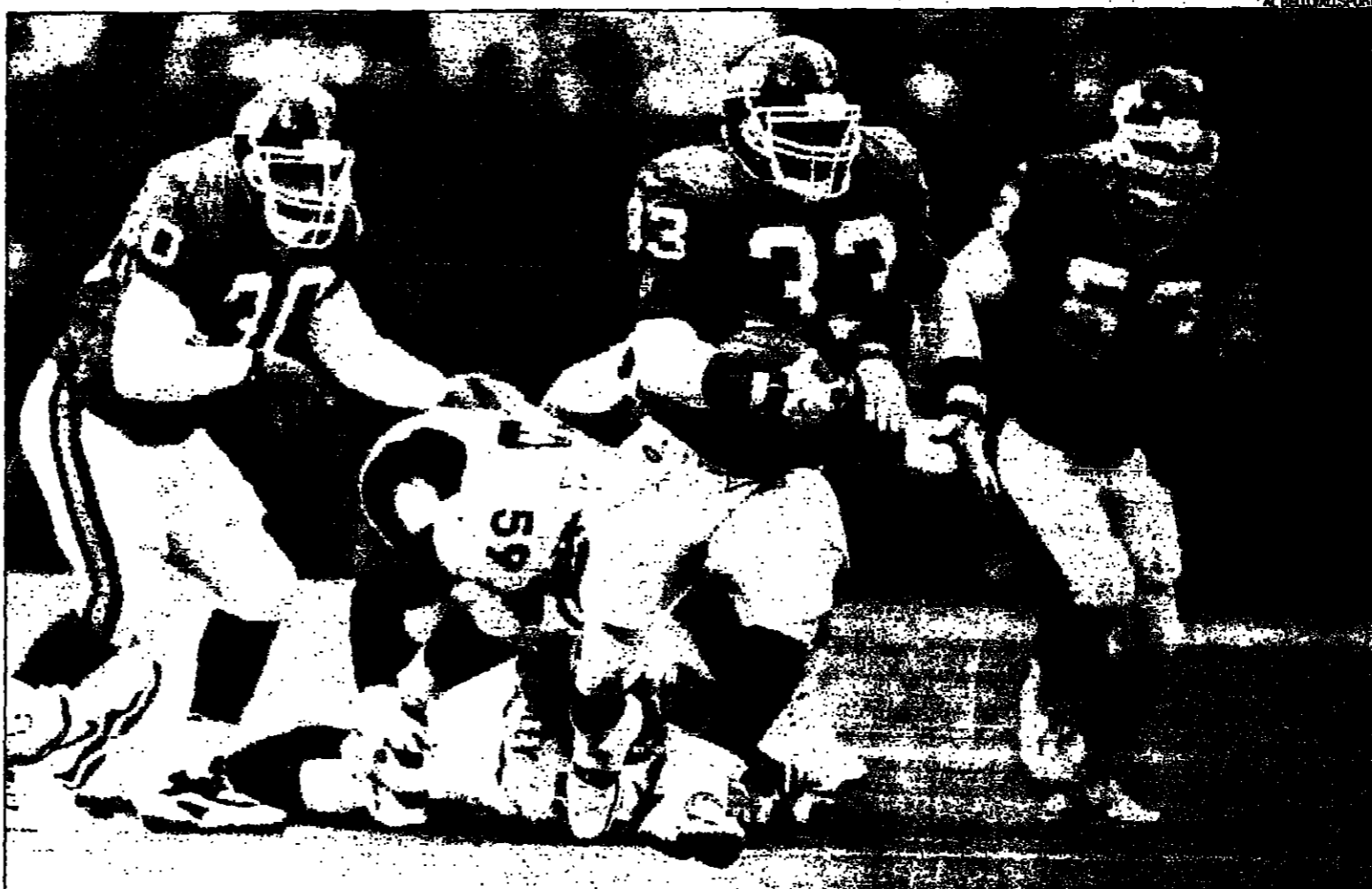
gold medals, but also produced a tremendous depth of performance," he said. "Juniors like Whitehead and [Deryk] Snelling are aware that, to maintain the advance in standards, the same level of success is necessary in the more important long-course summer season — and a comparison will be possible at the European long-course championships in Istanbul in July.

If Britain can get anywhere close to their achievements in Sheffield, then the gains will be seen to be real. In Turkey, the swimmers will face Hungarians and others who were absent from Sheffield, in an Olympic-sized pool, where the going gets tougher.

That said, the short-course season is becoming ever more important to swimmers as prize-money of the kind awarded in Sheffield — about £110,000 for records — becomes a part of swimming. In the first four months of 1999, the World Cup, swum over a short course, will come to its conclusion in Europe, with more prize-money to be won. Money from sponsors will also be on offer at the world short-course championships in Hong Kong in April.

Officials of the European Swimming League left Sheffield in a happy frame of mind because their newest event had been a televisual success. Yet they also expressed fears that so many records — 13 world and eight European — in some way devalued the championships and could lead to unrealistic expectations when the show is staged anew in Lisbon next year.

Meanwhile, Britain, which was behind the drive to introduce prize-money to championships, is bidding to stage the world short-course championships in Birmingham.



Brown, of the New York Giants, leaves the Denver Broncos defense in his wake as he breaks loose during the Giants' unexpected 20-16 victory

THEY thought that the last real obstacle would come next week when they played the Miami Dolphins. The Dolphins would be pumped up for that game, desperate to try to stop the Denver Broncos becoming the only team to emulate their perfect season of 1972. Well, the Dolphins can relax. The Broncos let things slide a week early.

No one expected Denver to lose, for the first time in 14 matches this season, to the lowly New York Giants. Only last week, the American magazine, Sports Illustrated, devoted its front cover to the question "Can Denver Win 'Em All?" Not content with that, it provided the answer, too. "Believe It!" the headline said.

Then, on Sunday, in the Meadowlands of New Jersey, the Broncos finally came up short, just two games shy of their goal. Their winning streak had lasted for 18 matches, including the playoffs and Super Bowl of last season, but it was snapped 48sec from the end of their game against the Giants when Kent Graham's 48-yard touchdown pass was caught by Amani Toomer in the end zone to give New York a 20-16 victory.

Broncos fall short in quest for perfection

By OLIVER HOLT

"It is disappointing to have to say goodbye to all that," John Elway, the Broncos quarterback, said. "We have been trying to play as well as we could, week-in and week-out, and, as it got closer, it was something that we started to get real excited about."

The Broncos had averaged more than 33 points in each of their first 13 games and, even though they had been restrict-

ed to three field goals in the first three quarters against the Giants, it seemed as though they had kept their record intact when Terrell Davis, their running back, gave them a 16-13 lead with only four minutes remaining.

However, Graham engineered a bewildering 86-yard drive into Broncos territory in

just six plays and 65sec that culminated in the pass to Toomer. Elway had one last chance to get Denver back into the game, but his ambitious, last-second pass into the Giants' end zone was knocked away by Percy Ellsworth.

"It's over now," Mike Shanahan, the Broncos coach, said. "Hopefully, this game will be a wake-up call for us with the play-offs almost here, but I'd

like to give credit to the Giants. They played an excellent football game."

The Broncos' defeat means that they are now tied for the best record in the National Football League with the Minnesota Vikings, who breezed past the Baltimore Colts 38-28, courtesy of another bravura performance by Randall Cunningham, their veteran quarterback, who threw for 346 yards. The Vikings, too, now have a record of 13 victories in 14 games.

If the Giants had the best result of the weekend, the New York Jets made it a thoroughly good Sunday for a city that has become the game's poor relation. The Giants have little chance of making the play-offs, but the Jets' 21-16 victory over the Dolphins in Florida established them at the top of the American Football Conference eastern division.

The Jets are now a game ahead of the Dolphins and the Buffalo Bills in this hard-fought division and have won their past four games. "This was another really tough game," Bill Parcells, the Jets coach, said. "I felt we had them a couple of times, but let them back in. This win gets us back into the tournament."

NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE RESULTS AND STANDINGS

Table with columns for Division (Central, Western, Eastern), Team, W, L, T, Points For, Points Against. Includes results for Buffalo 44 Oakland 21, Washington 58 0 Philadelphia 31 0, etc.

NotWest Personal Savings Rates

NotWest announces the following interest rates, effective from 15 December 1998:

Table with columns for Savings Type (TESSA Reserve, Crown Reserve, Diamond Reserve, Reward Reserve, Premium Reserve, First Reserve), Rate, and Minimum Balance. Includes details for various savings products.

The rates for all other personal savings accounts remain unchanged. Where appropriate, lower rates will be deducted at source from interest credited or paid. The Gross Rate is the rate paid before deducting income tax. The Annual Equivalent Rate (AER) is a rounded rate which shows the gross interest rate including any reward interest payable as a paid and compounded on an annual basis. The AER shown includes all conditional reward interest payable, compounding quarterly interest at 1.75% (gross) per annum and an annual interest reward of 0.50% (gross) per annum. Quarterly rewards are payable provided the account balance does not fall below £2,000 and no more than one withdrawal is made in any quarter. Annual rewards are payable provided the account remains in credit and no more than three withdrawals are made in any year. Should you close your account during a quarterly or annual period you will not receive any quarterly or annual reward for that period. For details of other interest rates please visit our website or call our helpline. All rates are subject to variation.



JUDO

Fairbrother finds her best form

By JOHN GOODBODY

BRITISH judo will begin the build-up to the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney with a settled coaching structure and also a team of sparkling potential. The evident ability of several competitors in the British closed championships in Cardiff on Sunday should give some success when Great Britain stages the world championships for the first time in Birmingham next October.

Even without Karina Bryant, twice the winner of world junior heavyweight titles, who did not compete on Sunday because of injury, there was enough talent on display to excite Udo Quellmalz, the German Olympic champion, who now supervises the coaching. There is more quality among the women than the men. In the lightweight class, Nicola Fairbrother, the 1993 world champion, took the title in a tactical contest against Debbie Allan, the 1995 European silver medal-winner.

Fairbrother is now training in Spain with Miriam Blasco, who beat her in the Olympic final in 1992. After a spell out of the sport this year with an injury, she has acquired a canny approach in addition to her natural movement and flair.

She said: "It is coming back. After a long lay-off, you have to get used to competition nerves, not getting too hyped up but not be too relaxed ei-

ther. I have been doing a lot on tactical work, stopping people's favourite moves, both left and right." Allan could not find a way through the guard of Fairbrother, who went ahead when her opponent conceded a penalty point.

Kate Howey, the 1997 world champion, took the middleweight title against Rachel Wilding, but without demonstrating her sharpest form, possibly because she has been suffering from flu. Howey did all the serious attacking, but she lacked the decisive bite in her techniques to beat Wilding inside the distance.

Like many of the Britain team, she will now go to Japan in the new year to take part in the Fukuoka tournament and then have ten days' training in the home of the sport.

The new management team should ensure that incidents do not occur such as that which affected Danny Kingston. The former European lightweight champion failed to make the lightweight category and instead took a bronze medal as a light-middleweight. In his absence, Eric Bonti, his training partner, displayed a series of dazzling throws to win the lightweight section and he left for Prague yesterday to represent Britain in the world student championships.



Graeme Randall, of Scotland, puts Jay Nicholson, of Yorkshire, on the floor during their contest in Cardiff

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT Steve Robinson and Peter Boyd of the USA reported this coup performed against them by an unnamed declarer in the World Pairs in Lille in August.

Bridge hand diagram showing Dealer South, Love All, and Pairs. Includes card layouts for both hands and a contract of Three No-Trump by South.

Contract: Three No-Trump by South. Lead: two of diamonds.

A spade honour or a passive heart would also have been popular choices of opening lead, but Robinson (West) went for the traditional fourth best diamond, to East's jack and declarer's ace. Declarer continued with a club to the king, and heart to the king, a club to the queen and a third club to clear the suit, as East discarded the nine of hearts. Of course the spade suit is wide-open, but can you blame West for continuing with the king and another diamond, when partner appears to be marked with the queen on the evidence of the first trick? You may say that declarer might have ducked at trick one with a weak ace holding, or that East should have been able to discard meaningfully on the third club. But in practice it is almost impossible to dispel the illusion, created at trick one, that partner has the queen of diamonds.

WORD-WATCHING

- By Philip Howard
HINAKI a. A child's game
b. A style of sampler
c. An eel-pot
MURID a. A fly
b. A disciple
c. An oil flask
NRITYA a. Matrarchy
b. A verse form
c. A dance

KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT White Vladimir Kramnik Black Garry Kasparov Blitz Match, Moscow 1998

Kasparov wins I continue today with two further wins by Garry Kasparov from his blitz chess match against Vladimir Kramnik. Kasparov will be in action in London tomorrow at the Berkeley Hotel, Knightsbridge, SW1 in a charity chess display, in which ten winners of The Times competition have gained free places.

Chess match record table showing White and Black results for various players and matches. Includes names like Kasparov, Kramnik, and various match numbers.

Keene online You can send me your queries, puzzles, problems and games direct by e-mail. The address is keene@compuserve.com. The best contributions from Times readers will be published either here or in the Saturday Times Weekend column. Raymond Keene writes on chess Monday to Friday in the Sport section and in the Times Weekend section on Saturday.

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene Black to play. This position is from the game Bogolyubov-Nimzowitsch, San Remo 1930. Seeing this position was inspired, White had already resigned. Had he continued, how would Black have demonstrated the win? Solutions on page 42

RACING: BHB CHAIRMAN PLAYS WAITING GAME OVER SPONSORSHIP SCHEME



Whippers Delight sets the pace in the Harry Fry Memorial Chase at Plumpton yesterday. The winner, Kilmington, is in the centre of the chasing group

Savill stalls on jockeys' logos

THOUGH Christmas songs were piping through the speakers before racing at Plumpton yesterday, the festive spirit stubbornly refused to mellow the 1,500 owners reported to have opted out of the jockeys' sponsorship scheme. In many eyes, the fact that one of them is Peter Savill qualifies the chairman of the British Horseracing Board (BHB) — which has endorsed the scheme — to audition for the role of Ebenezer Scrooge in what is becoming a downright pantomime.

It would be disingenuous, however, were Savill to deny that his stand could hamper the Jockeys' Association in realising the maximum potential sponsorship. It could also influence the Government's impression of racing's endeavours to generate extra revenue through self-help.

about a scheme that may be worth £500,000 in the jockeys' view. It's a million, I know where my priorities lie. We're talking about doubling prize-money, which is another £60-odd million, which means another six to the jockeys. In the long run, that's where we're really going to make a difference. Self-help is slightly ambiguous. We're not talking about bringing money into the sport, we're talking about it going to the jockeys. I've no fundamental problem with that, but we have to get to know who your sponsor is."

Savill, majority shareholder at Plumpton, was on hand to protest that he has no objections to the scheme, which starts in February. As the owner of a string of racehorses, however, Savill has never convinced jockeys that he is innocent of the coldness that taints the attitude of some owners to the fearless athletes who ride their horses, chiefly on a freelance basis. This plainly irritates Savill and he confirmed himself optimistic of participating once the jockeys have found and named their sponsor. He has exercised the veto in deference to his own sponsors, who wish to be assured of any potential conflict.

Michael Caulfield, the Jockeys' Association secretary, tried not to sound exasperated but reminded Savill of his bullish attitude in 1995, when rejecting fears of conflict between the new sponsors for owners and those already investing race prize-money. Caulfield added: "The number of owners preventing jockeys carrying out their business to best effect is embarrassing and it can't end out the right message."

Teeton Mill is heading for the King George VI Chase at Kempton on Boxing Day, and in Ireland's big Christmas chase, the Ericsson at Leopardstown, Richard Dunwoody will ride Florida Pearl.

RACING AHEAD Robert Wright suggests the best value in the ante-post market. GUIDE TO THE LEADING PRICES. Includes race details for Newcastle, Plumpton, and Hereford.

RESULTS FROM YESTERDAY'S TWO MEETINGS. Newcastle and Plumpton results including race numbers, winners, and odds.

SPECIALISTS. Lists of specialist horses and jockeys for various races.

Newcastle. Race details for Newcastle including race numbers, winners, and odds.

Plumpton. Race details for Plumpton including race numbers, winners, and odds.

Hereford. Race details for Hereford including race numbers, winners, and odds.

12.30 Kingsmark. Race details for Kingsmark including race numbers, winners, and odds.

1.00 Heathfield Novices Chase. Race details for Heathfield Novices Chase including race numbers, winners, and odds.

2.30 Lymnynovices Hurdle. Race details for Lymnynovices Hurdle including race numbers, winners, and odds.

12.30 Levy Board Novices Handicap Hurdle. Race details for Levy Board Novices Handicap Hurdle including race numbers, winners, and odds.

1.30 Sellindale Conditional Jockeys Handicap Hurdle. Race details for Sellindale Conditional Jockeys Handicap Hurdle including race numbers, winners, and odds.

3.00 Shadoxhurst Handicap Chase. Race details for Shadoxhurst Handicap Chase including race numbers, winners, and odds.

COURSE SPECIALISTS. Table showing performance statistics for various courses and jockeys.

2.00 Totand Chase (Showcase Race). Race details for Totand Chase (Showcase Race) including race numbers, winners, and odds.

3.30 Weatherbys Stars of Tomorrow Open National Hunt Flat Race. Race details for Weatherbys Stars of Tomorrow Open National Hunt Flat Race including race numbers, winners, and odds.

HEREFORD. Race details for Hereford including race numbers, winners, and odds.

12.40 Comfrey Maiden Chase. Race details for Comfrey Maiden Chase including race numbers, winners, and odds.

1.10 Cloves Novices Handicap Hurdle. Race details for Cloves Novices Handicap Hurdle including race numbers, winners, and odds.

1.40 Caraway Novices Handicap Chase. Race details for Caraway Novices Handicap Chase including race numbers, winners, and odds.

2.10 Lazy Punters Black Book Handicap Chase. Race details for Lazy Punters Black Book Handicap Chase including race numbers, winners, and odds.

2.40 Cowslip Conditional Jockeys Selling Hurdle. Race details for Cowslip Conditional Jockeys Selling Hurdle including race numbers, winners, and odds.

3.10 Comfrey Maiden Chase. Race details for Comfrey Maiden Chase including race numbers, winners, and odds.

3.40 Rosemary Handicap Hurdle. Race details for Rosemary Handicap Hurdle including race numbers, winners, and odds.

MUSSELBURGH. Race details for Musselburgh including race numbers, winners, and odds.

12.15 Good Luck Hearts & Hibs in 99 Maiden Hurdle. Race details for Good Luck Hearts & Hibs in 99 Maiden Hurdle including race numbers, winners, and odds.

12.45 Hearts FC at Musselburgh Today. Race details for Hearts FC at Musselburgh Today including race numbers, winners, and odds.

1.20 Billy Brown & Peter Houston Backroom Boys Novices Chase. Race details for Billy Brown & Peter Houston Backroom Boys Novices Chase including race numbers, winners, and odds.

1.50 Good Luck Hearts & Hibs in 99 Maiden Hurdle. Race details for Good Luck Hearts & Hibs in 99 Maiden Hurdle including race numbers, winners, and odds.

2.20 Colin Cameron First Minute Goal Handicap Chase. Race details for Colin Cameron First Minute Goal Handicap Chase including race numbers, winners, and odds.

2.50 Stephanie Adam Winning Goal Amateur Riders Handicap Chase. Race details for Stephanie Adam Winning Goal Amateur Riders Handicap Chase including race numbers, winners, and odds.

3.20 Steve Fulton Handicap Hurdle (Showcase and Tote Truface Race). Race details for Steve Fulton Handicap Hurdle (Showcase and Tote Truface Race) including race numbers, winners, and odds.

THE TIMES READER OFFER FREE. Advertisement for The Times newspaper subscription offer, including details on pricing and delivery.

RACELINE. Advertisement for Raceline horse racing service, including contact information and website details.

RICHARD EVANS. Advertisement for Richard Evans horse racing service, including contact information and website details.

Hussain's dismissal just before close puts Australia within sight of victory in third Test

England's challenge is reduced to ashes

ADELAIDE (fourth day of five): England, with six second-innings wickets in hand, need 321 runs to beat Australia

IF ONE did not know what had gone before, and was likely to occur again, all might have seemed serene in England's world. Their two form players were batting on a glorious Adelaide evening, as impressive in the second innings as they had been before the roof fell in on the first. Hope could not quite be abandoned.

Into the penultimate over of the penultimate day, Nasser Hussain and Mark Ramprakash were still together and so was the chipped crystal of England's tour. Then a momentary misjudgment from Hussain, who had batted almost seven hours in the game without serious lapse, shattered the lingering illusion.

Barring unforeseeable heroics or hurricanes, the Ashes were conceded with Hussain's retreating back. The further loss of a nightwatchman, four balls later, was a donation, silly but insignificant. In parting the one pair capable of thwarting them, Australia had taken the vital stride towards a fifth successful defence of the Ashes.

Hussain and Ramprakash alone have been sufficiently robust and resilient, marking up the price on their wicket even as others have indulged in the cheapest of sell-offs, but the odds against them were formidable. When they came together, with the fall of England's second wicket, the national victory target had shrunk to a mere 412. More realistically, though only just, was the requirement to bat out more than eight hours for a draw. Together, they managed the first two.

In so doing, they exaggerated an already unhealthy statistic. During the first three

FROM ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT IN ADELAIDE

Tests, England have recorded only 13 individual scores of 40 or more and eight have been shared by Hussain and Ramprakash. The parlousness of the rest of the batting is shocking, bewildering to selectors who had identified potentially the best English top six in recent memory.

Six opening partnerships have generated a sickly total of 109 runs and Mark Butcher, a century-maker in Brisbane, has produced 26 in his past four innings. Alec Stewart is such a sifting target for the spin bowlers that, yesterday, he took the rare step of moving down the order in mid-match.

The superiority of these opponents has many measures, among them the fact that Michael Slater's century, yesterday, was their 37th against England in the past ten years. England, in that period, can offer 18.

This was a day that went almost entirely to plan - Australia's plan. Without fuss or haste, though with much style and celebration from Slater, the world's outstanding team extended its already forbidding advantage to 442. When Taylor declared, 40 minutes after lunch, his reasonable demand would have been to capture four wickets before the day was out. Simple.

That matters should proceed in such facile fashion re-emphasises the unavoidable disparity. When England have done so with desperation, ceding to the wreckage of

their ship, Australia remain above deck, commanding operations in conditions

on a worn pitch, on which the ball turned and kept increasingly low, no serious obstacles were raised against Australia's batting progress. Of the four wickets yesterday, two were claimed by Darren Gough's inswinging yorker and two were the product of misplaced attacking shots.

Slater began the morning with successive fours off Gough and, liberated by licence to attack against defensive fields, his keen eye and nimble feet allowed him to work the ball deftly into gaps. He completed his century, from an overnight 74, inside half an hour and, such is his popularity, most would even forgive him his customary all-singing, all-dancing bout of self-congratulation.

The early stages of Justin Langer's innings had been marked by two dropped catches and a verbal confrontation with Hussain. John Reid, the national referee, has decided that there was nothing here to concern him, nor did he see reason to act against Glenn McGrath's latest burst of temper or Stuart MacGill's obscene send-off of Graeme Hick. This has not been an overly aggressive series, but one begins to wonder what it will take for Reid to reach for a red or yellow card. Langer's answer to the taunting was to increase his runs in the game to 231. Mark Waugh, warmly received after the booting of Friday, rediscovered touch with an unbeaten 51.

Taylor's peerless ability to make things happen imposed itself after a positive start by the England openers. Withdrawing McGrath and switching Damien Fleming's end, he was rewarded instantly by a rash out from Butcher against a wide long-hop.

Colin Miller, once again employed before MacGill, then bemused Michael Atherton and had him taken at silly point. Now, there was genuine danger of a four-day defeat, but the appearance of Ramprakash, rediscovered touch with an "all-rounder", he has failed miserably, as he has done before against these opponents. That is a shame, because he is one of the three batsmen in whom England hold the greatest hope. He is also broken as a captain. No man can juggle three important jobs in any team, let alone one as modest as this, and he will have to surrender one of them if England are to get the best out of him.

By standing down a place in the England second innings, on the fall of the second wicket, and sending in Ramprakash instead, he was acknowl-



Hussain, pinned on the back foot by Miller, awaits the verdict of Bucknor, the umpire, as the close fielders celebrate

General Stewart reveals flaws by dropping down the ranks

England have lost another significant bat the bats and, with it, another significant war. When Australia win today, as they surely will, the Ashes will stay with them and the defeated English soldier can sleep off to the next engagement, hears in their boots. Lost wars generally lead to the abdication of generals and although Alec Stewart will not fall on his sword - not yet - he is a broken leader.

Broken, not disgraced - and in two senses. As a batsman, he bounced down from the top of the order so that England had no batting depth, an "all-rounder", he has failed miserably, as he has done before against these opponents. That is a shame, because he is one of the three batsmen in whom England hold the greatest hope. He is also broken as a captain. No man can juggle three important jobs in any team, let alone one as modest as this, and he will have to surrender one of them if England are to get the best out of him.

By standing down a place in the England second innings, on the fall of the second wicket, and sending in Ramprakash instead, he was acknowl-

Michael Henderson calls for a new approach from a younger captain

edging the inevitable. David Lloyd, the coach, called it a "breathing space from the demands of keeping wicket", but there is no breathing space when a player is captain, batsman and stumper. There never could be. The selectors knew that when they appointed him, however nobly he performed against South Africa.

Lloyd thought that Stewart's position was not so serious that a score of 150 would not put it right - the sound of whistling in the dark if ever one heard it. Michael Slater, who had earlier completed his sixth hundred against England (six more than Stewart, another aggressive opener, has made against Australia) got it bang on the button when he said: "Australia's fielders were delighted to see Stewart demote himself."

There was a significant moment last night, after Stewart appeared at No 6 for the final over of the day. Ramprakash pushed MacGill's first ball through the off-side and, rather than take the run, chose to bat it out, sparing his captain the

bother of taking guard. It was his way of saying, "just watch from the other end, skipper, we have some mighty work to do on the morning".

Grand trouper that he is, Stewart was never cut out for a long period in office. What is required is a younger man with a clearer mind, qualities that have rarely found favour with the England selectors. With New Zealand coming to England next summer after the World Cup, there is an opportunity to pass the baton along.

Who would want it? Well, it is known that Hussain covets the job and he was disappointed to be overlooked when it fell vacant earlier this year. The fact that he was suggested that it might remain beyond his reach, though he enjoys a powerful sponsor in Graham Gough, who is a selector and the manager of this tour and would be keen to do things his way.

The other contender from within is Ramprakash, who inherited the captaincy of Middlesex from Mike Gatting and had a modest first season, but is considered to be "perfect material". A year younger than Hussain, he has made only one hundred in 32 Tests, so promotion would be on potential rather than solid achievement. Set against that, he holds his place on merit and is beginning to play as a Test batsman should, even if he misses too many catches for a leader of his gifts.

Twice in two days, this pair have borne England aloft on their shoulders. In the first innings, their century stand preceded an alarming collapse. Then, when Butcher and Atherton submitted for a second time, they batted with restrained passion until, when he thought he had got through to close of play, Hussain was left before to Miller.

Ramprakash remains patient, vigilant and hopeful that somebody can match him. So far in this series, he has batted for more than 15 hours, showing a doubtful nation that at least one Englishman has the stomach for the fight. Nobody can doubt Stewart's instincts. He will never have a better chance to reveal them.

SCOREBOARD FROM ADELAIDE

Table with columns for England and Australia scores, batsmen, and bowling figures. Includes sub-sections for 'England: First Innings' and 'Australia: First Innings'.

Change to Interest Rates.

With effect from the start of business on 15th December 1998 the following Business Cheque, Deposit and Lending rates are applicable to the accounts set out below:

Table of interest rates for various account types including Business Investment, Premier Interest, Business Call, Designated Clients, Schools Banking, Capital Reserve, Business Interest Cheque, and Flexible Business Loan.

TODAY'S FIXTURES

Table listing football fixtures for various leagues including Scottish League, FA Cup, and others.

POOLS FORECASTS

Table providing forecasts for various football pools such as Saturday December 19, Sunday December 20, and Saturday December 26.



MAGIC NUMBERS AND FREE CHAMPAGNE. What could be more desirable for anyone with a sparkling blood in their veins? The Times is again offering a bottle of sparkling champagne to those who contribute a magic number for Christmas. A magic number is one that contains numbers adding up to 666 and every year throws up new ones.

Standard 11.26, Special 9.72, Preferential 9.24, Managed A 11.52, Managed B 10.44, Managed C 9.36, Managed D 8.68.



AMERICAN FOOTBALL 38

Buckling Broncos reined in as Giants step forward

SPORT

GOLF 42

Westwood maintains his drive for major improvement



TUESDAY DECEMBER 15 1998

Wenger helps to lift ban fears Vieira assault verdict suits Arsenal fine

By Matt Dickinson

ARSENE WENGER used his considerable powers of rhetoric to secure one of Arsenal's most unexpected but significant victories of the season yesterday when Patrick Vieira was cleared of assaulting a police officer.

Vieira did not escape without punishment from the Football Association's disciplinary commission, receiving a record £20,000 fine for making a V-sign at Sheffield Wednesday supporters at the climax of a stormy game in September.

The midfielder player claimed that his gesture was in response to racial abuse. Nevertheless, the mood of the Highbury contingent was triumphant. Arsenal had feared that their France international could suffer a lengthy ban after his alleged clash with PC Jim Tune in the Hillsborough tunnel. That he did not, it appeared, was very much down to his manager's credibility during the 3½-hour hearing at Birmingham City's St Andrew's ground.

Three policemen had testi-

fied that Vieira shoved the constable across the tunnel. Wenger, who witnessed the incident, was adamant, however, that there had been no violence from his player and was clearly disturbed at the police's motives for pursuing the matter.

"I am surprised the police came here because, if they had real evidence, I would expect

Rangers sign McCann.....41

they would attack him on a criminal case, not through football," Wenger said. "The main charge was a huge one, but assaulting a policeman was not proved and was not right. Patrick behaved correctly in the tunnel. I have maintained that from the start because I was next to him.

"I felt very strongly that I had to defend him. To say anything else would make me a liar. I just had to tell the truth. Everyone gives his truth in this kind of case. I would say

maybe they [the police] were sincere, but there was no aggressive behaviour by Patrick towards a policeman.

"I feared it would go against us because the word of the police is always strong and you don't normally get three officers giving evidence against a footballer. It's the first time in 30 years I have seen something like that. You must ask them why they decided to pursue the charge. I think they had their reasons." Wenger would not elaborate on what he thought the motives might be.

With Vieira's disciplinary record since joining Arsenal far from unblemished — he has picked up 30 bookings and three red cards in 2½ seasons, as well as a £3,000 fine for kicking an opponent — the FA could have been expected to punish him heavily had he been found guilty over the incident on September 26. It came at the end of the FA Carling Premiership game in which Paolo Di Canio, the Sheffield Wednesday forward, was sent off and subsequently banned for 11 matches for pushing Paul Alcock, the referee, to the floor.

However, Vieira's defence — corroborated by four Arsenal employees, including Wenger — that he had not known it was a policeman who grabbed him was accepted by the three-man commission comprising Barry Bright, the vice-chairman of the FA's disciplinary committee, Ian Storr, the chairman of Oldham Athletic, and Maurice Armstrong, of Huntingdon FA.

"As he went down the tunnel, he felt himself grabbed from behind by an unknown assailant," an FA statement read. "He said he had broken free without realising it was a police officer." The £20,000 fine for the V-sign, which Vieira, 22, admitted, equals the punishment given to Vinie Jones in 1992 for narrating a video, Soccer's Hard Men. It equates, though, to only a fortnight's wages and is far preferable to him missing matches, given Arsenal's injury problems and their stuttering form in the Premiership.

"It is crucial to us that he won't miss any games," Wenger said. "Instead, he will make a good donation to the FA so put towards their new stadium or their Christmas presents. He's an aggressive



Vieira leaves the hearing at which he was cleared of assault but fined £20,000 for making a V-sign towards supporters

Celtic are given Viduka deadline

By Our Sports Staff

CROATIA Zagreb claimed yesterday that they had not received a penny of the £3 million that Celtic agreed to pay for Marko Viduka, the Australian striker, who walked out on the Scottish Premier League club last week. Zagreb insisted that if the money is not forthcoming in the next ten days, officials will turn to Fifa, the game's governing body, and Uefa, the European football union, for guidance.

Viduka is "resting" in Australia after leaving Glasgow without playing a match. At a press conference in Melbourne yesterday, he said that he was "an emotional wreck" after allegedly being subjected to a torrent of abuse from the Croatian club's supporters.

Goran Bradic, a spokesman for Croatia Zagreb, said: "The transfer fee was due last Thursday, but we are prepared to wait another ten days if necessary. If we do not receive the money by then, we will have to turn to the lawyers at Fifa and Uefa to see what we can do.

"It would be shameful if Celtic not to pay us the transfer fee. We are not guilty in this matter. We have done nothing illegal. We were not aware that Marko was suffering from emotional stress when he signed for Celtic."

Viduka, who insists that he will return to Celtic Park, said that his life had become unbearable in Zagreb because of the supporters' behaviour. He claimed that he had been unable to sleep or eat out and that he had been abused in the street. Bradic said: "Marko is a good guy, polite and honest — but maybe in some games for us he didn't try so hard. Once you get on the bad list of our fans, it is almost impossible to win back their support."

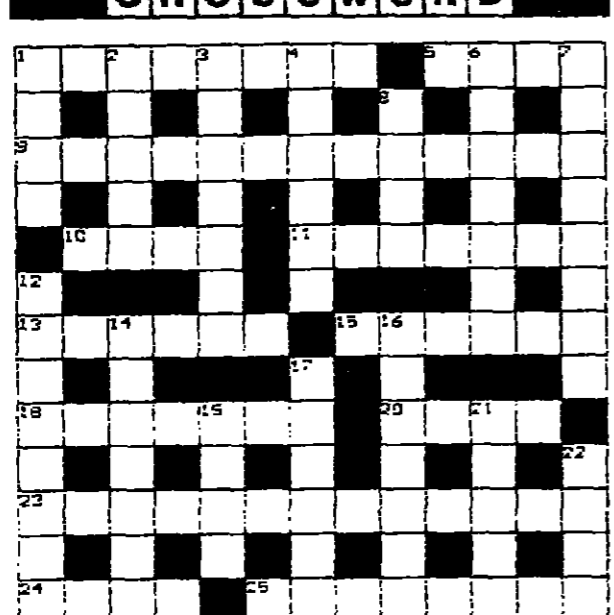
Viduka walked out on Celtic ten days ago on the eve of a match with Heart of Midlothian at Tynecastle, where he was expected to make his debut. He said: "I thought that, once I had escaped to a new country with similar values to Australia and a new club that welcomed me with warmth and support, I would be able to once again excel at the game I live for and love.

"But that wasn't the case. Halfway through my first training session with Celtic, I realised I was still experiencing the same feelings and emotional stress I felt at Croatia Zagreb. So I decided to come home to recover."



The dismissals of Di Canio, left, and Martin Keown ignited passions at Hillsborough in September

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1589

ACROSS

- 1 Tight-lipped (8)
5 Work the land (4)
9 Not flinch (at blow) (4,2,5,4)
10 Tie securely (4)
11 Daring deed (7)
13 Prestige official seal (6)
15 Restrain (esp. horses) (6)
18 He rescued wife from Hades (7)
20 Gentle, comfortable (4)
23 Survive to end (2,3,9)
24 (By) means (of) a blow (arch.) (4)
25 Passionate, forceful (8)

DOWN

- 1 Religious ceremony (4)
2 Symbol, counter (5)
3 Laugh gleefully (7)
4 Lower (regions) (6)
6 Dairy —, Young Visitors author (7)
7 Medieval balladeer (8)
8 Rough pile (4)
12 Unforseeable misfortune (5,2,3)
14 One for winding anchor (7)
16 Ribbon badge, prize (7)
17 Have ambition (6)
19 Regular, yet (4)
21 Dealer in stolen goods (5)
22 n in this country: lace (arch.) (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1555

- ACROSS: 7 True 8 Approach 9 Focund 10 Emblem
11 Vile 12 Re-create 15 Infringe 17 Duck 18 Tundra
21 Keenly 22 Infusion 23 Post
DOWN: 1 Armenian 2 Refuse 3 Mandarin 4 Apse
5 Double 6 Ache 13 Cheeking 14 Tickleish 16 Radium
17 Dieppe 19 Uina 20 Akin

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NEW TIMES CROSSWORD TITLES NOW AVAILABLE
The Times Two Crossword (No. 1589) The Times Crossword (No. 1589) The Times Crossword (No. 1589)...

China adds to Olympic corruption crisis

By John Goodbody

CHINA entered the Olympic bribery row yesterday by claiming that it may have lost the 2000 Games to Sydney because of corruption. With the International Olympic Committee (IOC) launching an inquiry into the "cash-for-votes" scandal, Beijing became the first unsuccessful city in recent polls to question the fairness of the ballot.

Wu Shouzhong, the secretary-general of the Chinese delegation to the Asian Games, told a news conference in Bangkok that it welcomed the investigation. He said: "The IOC must be united and clean," adding that "many non-sporting factors" were involved in the bidding war. Asked if that included corruption, Wu replied: "Yes,

there were all kinds of non-sporting factors." Beijing lost by two votes to Sydney in the poll in Monte Carlo in 1993, with many people believing that China's human rights record had crucially damaged its candidature in the eyes of many IOC members.

The Sydney bid leaders have confirmed that they were approached by an agent offering to get them votes, but they refused the offer. Beijing is re-applying for the 2008 Games, with the 2004 Olympics awarded already to Athens.

The biggest corruption crisis in the 103-year history of the Games began when Marc Hodler, a Swiss member of

the supreme IOC executive board, alleged that there had been systematic bribery and other malpractices in the choosing of the sites of the Games, including Atlanta, Nagano, Sydney and Salt Lake City.

Frank Joklik, the president of the Salt Lake City Organising Committee, gave a public apology and accepted full responsibility for a controversial scholarship scheme run by the group, which won the bid for the 2002 Winter Games. This programme provided nearly £250,000 in tuition and other assistance to 13 individuals, including six relatives of IOC members, mainly from Africa.

Hodler said at a press conference yesterday at the IOC headquarters in Lausanne, Switzerland that he feared he would be expelled from the IOC, although Juan Antonio Samaranch, the president, said that this would "never, never" occur.

Claims that Africans were involved have outraged Sam Ransamy, a member of the team that tried to take the 2004 Olympics to Cape Town. He emphasised that nothing improper had happened, adding: "The targets of these claims always seem to be Africans." Billy Payne, who led Atlanta's bid for the 1996 Games, also denied that any IOC members were bribed.

ICC makes promise of action

By John Goodbody

THE International Cricket Council (ICC), cricket's world governing body, is to investigate the increasing number of allegations of bribery and match-fixing. Jagmohan Dalmiya, the ICC president, said yesterday that the organisation could "no more sit on the fence".

He added: "Unfortunately, the very fabric of the great game is being damaged because of the charges of match-fixing or betting brought by the players."

The move comes after Shane Warne and Mark Waugh, of Australia, admitted that they accepted money from an Indian bookmaker in exchange for pitch and weather information during a tour of Pakistan and Sri Lanka in 1994. The pair had been fined by the Australian Cricket Board (ACB) in 1995, but the punishments were not publicly announced. The two players had earlier alleged that Salim Malik, a former Pakistan captain, had offered them bribes during the same tour, accusations that Salim has denied.

In another development yesterday, the Pakistani judicial commission that is investigating the allegations of Warne and Waugh has sent a formal request to the ACB for the two players to be made available for re-examination.



Grim-faced: Hodler, left, and Samaranch yesterday

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